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# The interactional community: a structural network analysis of community action in three Midwestern towns

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# The interactional community:
# A structural network analysis of community action in three Midwestern towns

by

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## ABSTRACT

The research examines how the structure of individual and organizational interaction within a community influences community action. The analysis is based on data from three rural, Midwestern communities. Data from a survey of community residents, leadership and organizational network data, and profiles of local community action projects are used to examine the relationship between the structure of local interaction and community action. The findings support a structural approach to the interactional community and confirm that social capital (the structure and character of individual interaction) and social infrastructure (the structure of group-level interaction patterns) influence community action processes. The findings have a number of implications for future community research and community development practice, such as the inclusion of network theory and methods as a tool for development of place-based communities.

# CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

What facets of community social structure facilitate a community's capacity to act? This question guides this dissertation research in the field of community sociology. An interactional community perspective, which focuses on the significance of social interaction and social structure, provides the theoretical framework. Concepts such as network analysis, social capital, and social infrastructure are integrated into the framework to illuminate important theoretical and methodological issues. Underlying the entire research project is an interest in the applied significance of community theory and methods for community development practice.

The evolving context within which communities exist has been matched by an evolution of community sociology. Early examples of community oriented research include Tönnies (1957[1889]) theorizing on the nature of associational life, Galpin's (1915) investigation of an agricultural community's countryside, and the development of human ecology to understand the spatial organization and evolution of communities by Park and associates (see Theodorson, 1961 for examples). More recent research includes examinations of community power (Hunter, 1953; Dahl, 1961; Domhoff, 1978); the political economy of communities (Logan and Molotch, 1987; Ramsey, 1996); and community network analysis (Wellman, 1979, 1996; Galaskiewicz, 1979).

These and other approaches should provide the foundation for applied community development endeavors. Unfortunately, there have been times when community sociology has become pre-occupied with more basic questions, such as whether community is even a relevant phenomenon of contemporary society (Wirth, 1988[1938]; Hunter, 1975; Bender, 1978; Wellman and Leighton, 1979). Some have argued that community is no longer relevant or "lost" as a result of urbanism and industrialization and a corresponding weakening of local ties. Others have argued that community is "saved" since neighborhood

communities persist despite societal changes (Hunter, 1975). The academic question of community's relevance aside, community remains important if simply because it is believed to be important by community residents.

Despite the debate concerning the existence of community, the term consistently appears in book and journal titles as a locational reference for the examination of other social issues. For example, Ziebarth, et al. (1997) examine the issue of housing, in a *Rural Sociology* article "Growth and Locational Impacts for Housing in Small Communities." In this research article community is a locational referent similar to how a shelf is a locational reference for where a book of interest is located. Another example is South and Crowder's (1997) study of residential mobility across neighborhoods in "Escaping Distressed Neighborhoods: Individual, Community, and Metropolitan Influences." They do refer to human ecological perspectives of community, but largely use community to delineate spatial boundaries for aggregation procedures. The use of community as a control rather than a meaningful influence on social life supports the supposition that there exists a relatively vital "sociology of community issues" and a weak "community sociology." A premise of this dissertation is that community is a meaningful geographic referent which also has significant social, economic, and psychological implications. Community is both a place and a social structure related to individual well-being and the capacity for community action to improve well-being.

An under-utilized community theory and the tendency to use "community" as a passive, locational referent limits academic and practical understanding of community problems and issues. This is not a new concern, Summers, et al. (1970) observed "we know a great deal about communities, but what we know does not add up to a coherent, systematic body of propositions, concepts and explanations which can be recognized as a sociological theory of community" (p. 218). Current pressures on localities to solve their own problems increases the need and potential for a vital community sociology relevant to contemporary

problems. In the next sections, three questions are answered to justify the elaboration and testing of a community theory relevant to real world problems. The three questions are: Why we need community development?; Why community sociology needs a theory?; and, Why community development needs community sociology?

## Why We Need Community Development

While living conditions in rural places have improved tremendously over the last fifty years, the benefits have not been equally distributed throughout nonmetro America. For example, while the number of high poverty concentration counties has declined dramatically since 1960, poverty is persistent (20 percent or more of the population living in poverty every decade since 1960) in 535 of the 2,288 U.S. counties. Many of these counties are found in the south or in scattered Native American reservations. Social problem are significant in these counties, including high unemployment, low educational attainment, and severe health concerns. Development of jobs and income within the community is needed if social and economic conditions are to be improved.

Outside the high poverty areas, a number of trends make development an issue in other rural regions as well. Conditions that historically have contributed to rural prosperity have changed tremendously in recent decades. Today, there is tremendous economic diversity in rural places with less than 8 percent of the rural workforce employed in farming and over two-thirds employed in service or manufacturing (Economic Research Service, 1995). In 1960, about 26 percent of the rural workforce was employed in agriculture, forestry, or fisheries (Department of Commerce, 1964). Today's diverse employment base means that agricultural policy is no longer a one-size-fits-all guarantee for rural prosperity (although maybe it never has been). Further, even as rural places attempt to diversify their local economies, distance, low population density and global competition remain potential liabilities.

There are communities with no history of persistent poverty or patterns of unstable employment, such as high amenity communities which have become retirement destinations or communities near growing metropolitan areas. But for other parts of rural America, prosperity is not as easily grasped. The diverse economic base and uneven growth across nonmetro America lead Walzer and Deller (1996) to conclude that "the problems and opportunities facing rural America are unique to each community" (p. 8). The uniqueness requires community development strategies that emerge, at least in part, from within the locality rather than from an all-encompassing policy.

Local responsiveness becomes even more challenging because of the economic trend away from a supply-side (focus on production) to a demand-side (focus on consumption) framework for development. Adapting to consumer demand and creating new markets is an increasingly important demand-side method for creating employment opportunities within localities (Eisinger, 1988). Recruiting large manufacturers is believed to have tremendous benefits for the local economy, but pits communities against one another (Eisinger, 1988) and the distribution of benefits can be stratified (Summers & Branch, 1984; Summers, 1977). Recently, entrepreneurial and self-development approaches (generally more demand oriented) have been promoted as means of improving economic opportunities while distributing benefits more equitably (Flora, et al., 1991; Gunn and Gunn, 1991; Hoy, 1996).

Community development is also more than creating jobs or local income, there is also a need to improve local services and facilities (Wilkinson, 1991). Beyond development that seeks to create jobs and income, community development which improves local services and facilities is often necessary.

## Why Community Development Needs Community Sociology

The problems and challenges faced by communities and the demand for strategies for developing the local community and economy have given rise to a vital community

development profession. With a professional society (Community Development Society), numerous public and private practitioners, public and private funded community development initiatives, and numerous published resources and communication outlets, community development is a significant and diverse endeavor. As localities come to bear more responsibility for the social and economic well-being of residents, resources and programming that build community capacity and assist development will continue to be demanded.

There are several definitions of community development. One synthetic definition is "a group of people in a locality initiating a social action process (i.e., planned intervention) to change their economic, social, cultural, and/or environmental situation" (Christenson, et al., 1989:14). Many local actions can be viewed as community development, such as building a history museum, recruiting an industry, downtown improvement activities, formation of a community day-care, or a city-wide tree planting campaign. An implicit assumption of community development is that the development or change is positive, although benefits are not always equally enjoyed throughout the community (a criticism discussed further in the next chapter).

One important community development distinction in the literature distinguishes between development "in" the community versus development "of" the community (Kaufman, 1959; Summers, 1986). Community economic development is an example of development in the community, where jobs or income are created in the local territory. Development of the community concerns the social structures that integrate an individual into society. Social well-being and the potential for self-actualization are argued to be maximized where the community has well-developed, integrative social structures. Creation of organizations that strengthen interactional ties of residents is one example of development of the community (Shaffer and Summers, 1989; Kaufman, 1959, Wilkinson, 1972). Development *of* or *in* the community need not be an either/or proposition. In fact, it is likely

that development in the community can contribute to development of the community, such as the creation of new social organizations to manage particular economic development/community improvement projects. Conversely, conscious improvements of social structure that improve local communication could contribute to development in the community.

Within the field of community development, there are three broadly defined approaches: a self-help approach, a technical assistance approach, and a conflict approach. The self-help approach stresses the need for people to work together to solve their problems (Littrell & Hobbs, 1989). The process of community residents working together is more important than the actual project, since successful collaboration is believed to create the conditions for future efforts to work together. The self-help approach generally focuses on development of the community. The technical assistance approach relies heavily on planning and technical know-how (Fear, et al., 1989). Technical experts, often from the outside, are the important change agents employed by a local sponsoring agency to provide assistance for a specific problem. Unlike in the self-help approach, local residents are not central to the project and are sometimes not involved at all. Critics of this approach argue that for technical assistance to represent community development it is important to include local residents. The third community development perspective, a conflict approach, critically examines the power structure and distribution of benefits among groups within the community (Robinson, 1989). A conflict approach is critical of the technical assistance experts who may improve the condition of the elites at the expense of the poor. Advocates of this approach believe conflict is necessary for community development. The role of the community developer following a conflict approach is to organize the weaker, oppressed group to challenge the dominant power structure. The desired end is a more equitable distribution of benefits.

All three approaches have strengths and weaknesses. Some argue the self-help approach encourages gradual change versus the rapid changes resulting from a conflict approach, leading some to argue the self-help approach may be more sustainable over the long term (Christenson, 1979). An important observation of Christenson's (1989) about both the self-help and technical assistance approaches is their non-theoretical grounding. While some community development literature tangentially addresses theory, Christenson states "I feel relatively safe in asserting that few self-help articles [in the Journal of the Community Development Society] were related to or based on theory during the last two decades" (p. 34).

Where is community sociology and the social theory which can inform community development practice? Summers (1986) observes that practitioners "are left to depend upon conventional wisdom, which too often turns out to be based on myths" (p. 367). There have been recent attempts to link social theory and community development, such as Ryan's (1994) discussion of collective action and why it occurs in communities. By linking social theory to the idea of collective action, Ryan offers some ideas about how community development might make better use of community social structure. But Ryan is an exception and Summers' contention that "a proper sociology of community would facilitate the work of practitioners who lack the time, the resources, the opportunities, and often the necessary training and skills to research these underlying forces and the context within which intervention is planned" (p. 367) remains an unfulfilled possibility.

## Why Community Sociology Needs a Theory

The need for community development and the potential usefulness of community sociology to community development practice lead to consideration of one last introductory question: why community sociology needs a theory? Since the turn of the century, community has been a subject of inquiry for a great number of social researchers. Outlining the history of this inquiry becomes problematic as everyone seems to have their own

particular interpretation (Lyon, 1988; Summers, 1986; Warren, 1978), but there have been a number of avenues of research that have helped define the field.

A basic theme of prior work include attempts to derive an acceptable definition of community. In conversation, the term is used in a variety of ways—a professional community, a community of friends, the community of residence, and the global community. Hillery's (1955) review of community definitions in social science literature turned up ninety-five definitions of community and his review has become a cornerstone of the community literature ever since. A definition that appears workable for a good number of sociologists (particularly rural sociologists) includes three integral components: 1) social interaction; 2) geographic space; and 3) common ties (see Hillery, 1955; Wilkinson, 1991).

Beyond defining community, a number of central theoretical and methodological approaches in community research are noted. In the following paragraphs, four popular approaches are identified. One of the earliest perspective was a typological approach originating from applications of Tönnies' (1955[1887]) concepts of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft to understand changes in rural and urban character due to industrialization and other social changes. Wirth's "Urbanism as a Way of Life" (1988[1938]) is the cornerstone for associating gesellschaft-like association with urban places. The typological approach has limitations, namely the fact that once a community is placed on a typological continuum, what else is there? (Lyon, 1988). The failure of the typological approach to definitively characterize communities as being gemeinschaft-like or gesellschaft-like led Dewey (1960) to conclude that typological distinctions are not that important. The significance of the continuum is defended by Bell (1992) who finds evidence in a small English village that rural and urban (or gemeinschaft and gesellschaft) continue to be important sources of psychological identification of residents and remains relevant sociological interest.

A second community perspective uses an ecological approach that was first formulated at the University of Chicago by social scientists who were influenced by

developments in the natural sciences. Robert Park and students interpreted the spatial organization of cities by examining competition among various social groups (Park, 1961). Unfortunately, what explained the development of Chicago was found to have limited applicability in other cities (Warren, 1978). Unique historic factors influencing Chicago's development were often unmatched in other contexts. Criticisms of this perspective have given rise to a new ecological approach that stresses the adaptive processes of a population rather than the geographic organization of the population (Hawley, 1981).

A conflict approach represents a third community perspective. For many conflict theorists, the urban locale is a setting where various economic forces clash. For example, Castells (1988) explains some "grassroots" urban movements against poverty or segregation as resulting from contradictions in the inner cities. Another conflict approach, synthesized with elements of an ecological approach, is Logan and Molotch's (1987) idea of the growth machine where conflict over land use plays a central role. Economic elites seek to maximize the exchange value of land while neighborhood residents seek to improve its use-value. The growth machine approach is more sensitive to territory than most conflict approaches. For most conflict theorists, the macro-level forces originating beyond the community oftentimes structure local conflict making such forces more important than issues of territory, interaction, and solidary ties.

A social systems theory, the fourth leading perspective, emphasizes functions of the community, particularly locality relevant functions. Key issues addressed by a systems approach include the delineation of the units composing the community, relationships among these units, the boundary of these relationships, systemic linkages across boundaries, and how communities vary from other social systems (Bates & Bacon, 1972). Warren (1978) adopts a systemic approach to explain tensions between the gemeinschaft-like community and social changes leading to more gesellschaft-like communities. Warren reconciles this tension by distinguishing between the vertical (extracommunity links) and horizontal (local)

patterns among community subsystems and social units by arguing that the organization and character of a community's sub-systems can be understood in relation to vertical and horizontal linkages.

Two important perspectives associated with the social systems approach include the interactional field and social networks.[1] Social interaction is the key to the interactional perspective where local community action is viewed as the product of territorially based interactions and solidary bonds (Kaufman, 1959; Wilkinson, 1991). Interaction is also central to a network perspective, but territory becomes less relevant (Wellman and Leighton, 1979). In fact network analysis during the late 1970s and early 1980s was used to identify networked communities, thus transcending local territory.

In 1979, Warren was not optimistic about the emergence of one overarching community theory, believing that much could be learned from a variety of community approaches. He was particularly enthusiastic about network and neo-Marxist theories. Nearly 20 years later, that enthusiasm has mustered limited interest. Zekeri's (1992) review of the surprisingly sparse testing of the growth machine hypothesis by community sociologists attests to the possibilities (and need for further elaboration) of this perspective. The growth machine was first proposed over 25 years ago (Logan, 1976; Molotch, 1976 and elaborated in Logan and Molotch, 1987), but has received much more reference than empirical validation. The growth machine is often identified (almost anecdotally) as a possible explanation of local inequality (Albrecht, et al. 1996; Green, et al., 1996), while the validity and true character of the growth machine in a community more often is assumed than empirically explored. Similarly, the interactional and network perspectives have seen limited use or elaboration. Wellman (1979) championed network analysis as a method to understand the flow of resources within non-spatial, personal communities. The techniques, though,

[1] Lyon (1989) associates the two with the social system approach, although others have identified these two approaches as interactional approaches, separate from a systems approach (Murdock and Sutton, 1974).

have been little used outside the cadre of researchers who originated the techniques. The use of the interactional perspective, championed by Wilkinson for over 30 years (most recently with a synthetic, theoretical treatise (1991)) has also not been extensively utilized or systematically tested outside a cadre of his students and colleagues at The Pennsylvania State University (for example, Luloff, 1990; Martin and Wilkinson, 1984; Lloyd and Wilkinson, 1985).

Why does the history and current state of community sociology matter? Because the legacy of community research is the basis for understanding community. Warren (1988) optimistically reflects on the variety of community perspectives—"let us have a kit of good tools" (p. 85). Unfortunately, this "kit" is only of occasional use. There are a number of factors for this: the direct attack on the continued relevance of community in a mass society; difficulty transferring some case-based research to other community contexts; a schism between urban and rural community research (Summers, 1986); and inadequate theoretical elaboration and empirical validation of existing perspectives. These factors lead to anecdotal references to community theory in research and the use of community as a contextual referent instead of a social structure which influences social processes and local well-being.

What passes as community sociology today is in need of an invigorated theoretical research base to explain the existence, significance, and influence of community. Without this research, the potential of community sociology is unrealized.

## The Interactional Community Perspective

The need for rural communities to purposively act to improve their condition; the existence of a well used, although largely atheoretical arsenal of community development strategies; and several under-developed/utilized community perspectives, give birth to the following research problem: can a community theory be articulated and/or elaborated which contributes to community development efforts aimed toward improving community well-

being? In this section, a community theory capable of explaining the existence of community and the process by which communities act to improve their condition is introduced. The theory is elaborated as a structural perspective in the next chapter and guides the subsequent analysis.

Originated by Kaufman (1959) with extensive elaboration by his student Wilkinson (1991, 1972, 1970a; 1970b) the interactional community perspective has a tremendous amount of untested potential as a community theory and as a tool to aid community development. The perspective was first described as an approach that might stem the perceived negative influence of an emerging mass society while also serving as a template for guiding development efforts (Kaufman, 1959). Consistent with the generally accepted definition of community, the interactional community is comprised of a territory, a local society and a process of locality oriented collective actions (Wilkinson, 1991:2). According to Wilkinson (1991), "the substance of community is social interaction" (p. 13), and each of the three components are discerned through examination of interaction.

With the interactional approach, communities are not autonomous social systems that exist independent of the larger society, but have varying levels of systemic completeness and interaction. Kaufman recognized that some local communities are affected by residents working and meeting daily needs outside the local area. He concludes there is a role for both the homogenous (cohesive community with high resident orientation to the locality) and the cosmopolitan (a community marked by anonymous, mass, extra-local contacts) forms of community. He states: "within any given local society a balance needs to be maintained between what might be termed processes of localization—those which focus on life within the locality and its distinctiveness—and the lateralization processes—those which orient social life beyond the locality and tend to make the participants concerned members of various national publics" (p. 17). Kaufman avoids the typological trap by formulating a perspective that allows community and the mass society to coexist.

Wilkinson, Kaufman's student and the most recent champion of the interactional perspective, synthesizes over thirty years of interactional thought in the text *The Community in Rural America* (1991). Despite critics who contend that community has been rendered irrelevant by forces of mass society, Wilkinson asserts the thesis that

> The community has not disappeared and has not ceased to be an important factor in individual and social well-being. People still live together in places, however fluid might be the boundaries of those places. They still encounter the larger society primarily through interactions in the local society. And, at crucial moments, they still can act together to express common interests in the place of residence. Local social life has become very complex in the typical case, but complexity and the turbulence associated with it do not in and of themselves rule out community (1991: p. 6).

By defining a community's territory, associational patterns, solidarity and processes of collective action in terms of interaction, the complexity of modern social life is captured by the interactional perspective. A community's territory is defined by local interaction patterns, but territory also shapes the pattern of local interaction. Although a community may lack the completeness of a wholly independent social system, the interactional approach examines the dynamic and emergent patterns of interactions that *do* exist among individuals, organizations and institutions to identify the structure of community social life. Finally, interaction may lead to a shared bond among residents that becomes a basis for community solidarity and community action. According to Wilkinson (1991), elemental bonds among community residents emerge from social interactions, particularly those "that embody and express mutual interests in the common life of a local population" (p. 14).

Both Kaufman's and Wilkinson's applied orientation results in the interactional perspective's focus on community action. Community action is an expression of the shared local bond and a means by which communities act to improve their condition. Three important analytical elements to consider in collective action are: 1) the actors or participants; 2) the groups or associations through which the action occurs; and 3) the states and phases of the

action (Kaufman, 1959:11). Further, the notion of a field is introduced as a means of understanding the dynamic and emergent character of community action. According to Wilkinson (1991: 35-36) a field represents "an unbounded whole with a constantly changing structure" (1991: 35-36). A social field represents "a process of interaction through time, with direction toward some more or less distinctive outcome and with constantly changing elements and structure" (1972:317).[2] There are multiple social fields present in any community, such as a health care field, an education field, and an economic development field. Within each field, individuals form associations in pursuit of the respective interest. To varying degrees social fields are locality-oriented. When there is a high degree of locality orientation to the action, this is identified as community action[3].

An important integrative component of the interactional perspective is the community field, where the instrumental orientations of various social fields are organized around the general community interests:

> The actions in this field serve to coordinate other action fields, organizing them more or less (through an unbounded, dynamic, and emergent process) into a whole. The community field has actors, associations, and activities, as any social field does; but the interest that guides this field is an interest in structure rather than in specific goals such as economic development or service improvement. The structural interest in the community field is expressed through linking, coordinating action, actions that identify and reinforce the commonality that permeates the differentiated special interest fields in a community (Wilkinson, 1991:90).

As indicated earlier, the interactional perspective has arguably been underutilized as a theoretical community perspective. This is not the result of limited dissemination of Kaufman and Wilkinson's work. Community textbook readers have included interactional perspective literature for over thirty years. For example, Warren's (1966) first edition of

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[2] One complicating issue is the fact that some elements fall into several different social fields. For example, local government may be found in a field oriented toward economic development and fields oriented toward health services.

[3] There are a number of ways to evaluate the degree of local orientation, such as the extent to which the activity is identified with the whole community or the number of local organizations involved, etc.

*Perspectives on the American Community: A Book of Readings* included a reprint of Kaufman's 1959 *Social Forces* article. Warren and Lyon's (1988) fifth edition of the reader replaced Kaufman's article with Wilkinson's 1972 *Social Forces* article. Despite its inclusion as a cornerstone perspective of community sociology, empirical tests of the interactional perspective have been modest and generally limited to Wilkinson, his students and colleagues. In addition, much of the emperical analysis has relied statewide surveys of one or a couple community informants rather than in depth analysis of local interaction. Examples of direct empirical analysis of the interactional community include: examination of participation in flood insurance programs (Lulloff and Wilkinson, 1979); development of rural manufacturing (Lloyd and Wilkinson, 1985) and acquisition of federal grant funds (Martin and Wilkinson, 1984). In these analyses, indirect measures of solidarity or a community field are utilized. For example, passage of zoning ordinances or an application for a bicentennial grant are included in an index of past activeness, a proxy for a community field. The justification is that "a pattern of accomplishments in previous community efforts implies a network of associations among community leaders and others that can be activated to pursue particular local goals" (Martin and Wilkinson, 1984:377). While past activeness has been found to be a significant predictor of action, a much deeper examination of community social interaction is required.

**Interactional Community as a Structural Perspective**

What the interactional approach may lack is an analytical orientation consistent with the dynamic and emergent character of interaction within the community. Both Kaufman and Wilkinson allude to network techniques for analyzing the interactional community, although they make limited use of these techniques. When studying the community actor, "one investigates his behavior in organized groups and informal networks which are located in the locality" (Kaufman, 1959:11). When delineating the boundaries of a local territory,

"sociologists should plot the social networks among people to see where in fact they occur" (Wilkinson: 1991:23). The failure to systematically compare networks of interaction across communities may be one of the most significant shortcomings of the perspective as thus far developed.[4]

The key concept of the interactional perspective, the field, appears to require a structural network approach to be fully understood. In Wilkinson's early work (1970b), the idea of a field is proposed as a concept for understanding the dynamic and emergent character of interaction. In Wilkinson's later work (1991) fields remain prominent but are enriched with formal structural ideas from Wellman (1979), Granovetter (1973), and Bender (1978). The next step is to move beyond recognition of these structural network ideas in a literature review and incorporate the ideas into research designs and analysis.

In the next chapter, the process of formally integrating the interactional community and a structural perspective begins. This requires explication of what a structural approach means and what it implies for the central concepts of the interactional community, such as territory, local society, solidarity and community action. Three assumptions underpin the theoretical elaboration that is undertaken in Chapter 2:

1) The interactional community components—a local territory, local society, and community solidarity/action—can be structurally defined and their existence and significance validated through analysis of key interactional elements: individuals, organizations, and actions.
2) Structural network analysis can help illuminate a community's social fields, the community field, and community action.

[4] This is not to suggest there has been no network analysis of social structure in the interactional community, Beaulieu and Ryan (1984) find that interorganizational leaders (persons holding three or more organizational leadership positions) were more intensely involved in community action processes. Their analysis suggests that positioning within the local social structure is related to community participation.

3) Blending the interactional perspective with a structural approach highlights important community structures that can be altered or developed to enhance community development.

These assumptions and the theoretical elaboration in Chapter 2 converge with the proposal of two hypotheses which guide the analysis found in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. Data approximating and measuring various interaction patterns within the community provide a snapshot of the structural arrangements in the interactional community and anticipate the form and capacity of community action. These findings are tied together in the final chapter with a discussion of the implications of these findings for future research, community sociology, and community development practice and policy.

# CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE AND THEORY

Structural analysis (Wellman, 1988; Knoke, 1990), network theory (Ritzer, 1996), network analysis (Scott, 1991; Wellman, 1983), and relational or transactional perspective (Emirbayer, 1997) are referents (often used interchangeably) to a sociological interest in how the pattern of ties or relationships within a social system allocate resources, such as support, money and power (Wellman, 1988:20). Whether structural network analysis[5] is a metaphor, a theory, or a technique has been a subject of discussion among many of its leading proponents (Wellman, 1988; Knoke, 1990). The techniques of network analysis are probably the most widely known facets of this approach, but as structural thought becomes more widely accepted, with the organization of a society (International Network of Social Network Analysts), the publication of a journal (*Social Networks),* and the development of a book series (Structural Analysis in the Social Sciences, published by Cambridge University Press), a coherent structural perspective that is more than technique is coalescing.

Wellman (1988) identifies five general principles of the structural alternative (1988:30-40):

1) Structured social relationships are a more powerful source of sociological explanation than personal attributes of system members
2) Norms emerge from location in structured systems of social relationships
3) Social structures determine the operation of dyadic relationships
4) The world is composed of networks, not groups
5) Structural methods supplement and supplant individualistic methods.

Many of these principles contrast with what structural adherents see as a major shortcoming of most contemporary sociological analysis, excessive attention to categorizing and identifying unit attributes to the exclusion of examining social processes and relationships.

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[5] Structural analysis as used here is explicitly a relational, network oriented perspective, not to be confused with many of the other structural orientations. These other structuralisms include: attempts to understand unconscious "deep structure" by Levi-Strauss (1951); Giddens' theory of structuration (1984); or the highly quantitative method of structural equation modeling. (See Knoke, 1990a:16-18, for additional detail).

Most statistical approaches propose causal relationships among elements, categorized by particular attributes, and referred to as variables. The unit of analysis is static, with inherent and uniform properties determined a priori of actual social relationships. A structural approach focuses on the relationship between units rather than gross classifications of units. Relational analysis is conducted with the premise that: "the structure of relations among actors and the location of individual actors in the network have important behavioral, perceptual, and attitudinal consequences both for the individual units and for the systems as a whole" (Knoke and Kuklinski, 1982:13).

Emirbayer (1997) extensively contrasts what he calls a relational or transactional approach (structural network analysis being an example) with substantialist approaches. Substantialists thought

> takes as its point of departure the notion that it is *substances* of various kinds (things, beings, essences) that constitute the fundamental units of all inquiry. Systematic analysis is to be with these self-subsistent entities, which come 'preformed,' and only then to consider the dynamic flows in which they subsequently involve themselves (p. 282-283).

According to the relational approach, in contrast, units or elements derive meaning from the roles played within transaction. Transaction, "as a dynamic, unfolding process, becomes the primary unit of analysis rather than the constituent elements themselves" (p. 287).[6]

Structural analysis also contrasts with two of the most popular paradigms for explaining social behavior: normative conformity and objective rationality. A normative conformity approach emphasizes norms or values as guiding action. The criticism of normative conformity is "its failure to situate the normative processes in concrete entities and ongoing relationships among social actors" (Knoke, 1990a:21). Objective rationality is found to be problematic as well. The rational choice model views individuals as choosing a course

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[6] The analysis of dynamic networks remains problematic, though, according to Emirbayer (1997). Analysis of static networks has been successfully undertaken, but analysis of the processes that transform networks continues to be challenging (p. 305).

of action after computation of the costs and benefits of a variety of possible actions. The leading criticism is that these individual actors are "abstracted out of complex social contexts and depicted as pursuing narrow self-interests devoid of complex social connections to other system members" (Knoke, 1990a:25).

The embedded approach as articulated by Granovetter (1985) probably best summarizes the structural critique of the "over-socialized" (normative conformity) and "under-socialized" (objective rationality) views. Granovetter (1985) recommends:

> A fruitful analysis of human action requires us to avoid the atomization implicit in the theoretical extremes of under- and oversocialized conceptions. Actors do not behave or decide as atoms outside a social context, nor do they adhere slavishly to a script written for them by the particular intersection of social categories that they happen to occupy. Their attempts at purposive action are instead embedded in concrete, ongoing systems of social relations (p. 487).

Thus, a structural orientation directs attention toward social structure to understand the constraints and opportunities emerging from social interaction.

An attraction of the structural approach is the analytic alternative of depicting social reality in "dynamic, continuous, and processual terms" (Emirbayer, 1997:281). Kaufman (1959) was making the same point with the interactional community perspective, "interest in community change and development calls for theory and research focusing on dynamics and process" (p. 8). The interactional community perspective has been implicitly a structural perspective, with well developed structural arguments to describe the emergence and persistence of community. In the following sections, some of the ideas and techniques favored by structural analysts are linked to the interactional community perspective developed by Kaufman and Wilkinson.

### The Community Question, the Liberation of Community, and Rethinking Territory

Territory has been problematic in community sociology despite being identified as a common component of most community definitions (Hillary 1955). The interactional

community perspective contains a clear territorial component despite the challenges presented by mass society.

Wilkinson (1991) argues that recent transformations of communities (such as the increased significance of the larger society and the challenge of defining the fixed boundaries of a community) are not new, but have been plaguing communities since the 1700s and earlier. His solution to the territorial issue is to view social interaction as the deciding factor for determining local territory. Interaction delineates the local territory and these borders are in constant flux depending on where people interact. The built environment both is created by local inhabitants and shapes their interaction. "Thus, the study of how interaction processes shape and are shaped by the local territory is an appropriate focus for the sociology of community" (Wilkinson, 1991:23). To illustrate this, imagine the growth of a community and the development of a retail district on the edge of town. The new retail district shifts some interaction away from the central business district and also might pull proximate rural residents who shopped elsewhere into the community's new retail shopping area. Similar interactional shifts can occur in urban central cities as suburbs develop.

Defining a community's territory requires mapping of interactional patterns. Mapping cannot hope to encompass the entire realm of resident social relations within a community, but partial mapping may identify spatial boundaries of important interaction patterns. To the extent that a significant degree of social interaction is located within a bounded space, the community's territory can be defined. The approach may seem imprecise or arbitrary at the borders, but Galpin (1915) successfully dissected the anatomy of a rural community using a similar approach.[7] A good example of mapping personal interaction originating from within a specific territory has been conducted by Wellman (1979, 1996) and associates (Wellman & Leighton, 1979) in the Toronto neighborhood of East York.

[7] Galpin's study has been referred to as a "wagon wheel study" because one basis for determining the rural resident's community was the direction of the deepest wheel ruts at the end of the farm lane (or at least that's the myth).

Wellman (1979) seeks to answer the "Community Question," which is "the question of how large-scale social systemic divisions of labor affect the organization and content of primary ties....[The Question] has proposed the problem of structural integration of a social system and the interpersonal means by which its members have access to scarce resources" (p. 1201). Prior to Wellman's work, two leading responses to the community question were the "community lost" and "community saved" arguments. The "community lost" argument follows Wirth's (1988[1938]) thinking that urbanism and industrialization have weakened primary ties and leave individuals relatively isolated with little community. In essence, community is lost and no longer relevant to modern social life. In response, other sociologists found support for the continued existence of community. The "community saved" argument maintains that neighborhood communities persist as important sources of support and sociability (Hunter, 1975; Wellman and Leighton, 1979).

Wellman (1979) criticizes the Lost and the Saved arguments for being overly concerned with the existence of solidary sentiments and the persistence of primary ties in a local area. The Lost argument posits that solidary sentiment and local primary ties have weakened or disappeared in an urban area while the Saved argument posits that solidary sentiments persist in local areas such as a neighborhood. Wellman proposes that "the proper concern of sociologists is the analysis of social structure and social linkages, with questions of social sentiments and spatial distribution holding important, but secondary, positions" (p. 1202). He proposes a Community Liberated position, which abandons the Saved arguments attachment to local territory. Instead, the liberated approach identifies how individuals access resources through primary ties "dispersed among multiple, sparsely interconnected social networks" (p. 1207). In the study of the urban neighborhood of East York the

> solution has been to treat East Yorkers' networks as personal communities. We look for the social essence of community in neither locality nor solidarity, but in the ways in which networks of informal relations fit persons and households into social structures. Our approach focuses attention on the characteristics of "community

> ties"—informal links of companionship and aid between individuals—and on patterns formed by these links (Wellman, et al., 1988:131).

Despite the visible absence of a vital community on the streets of East York, Wellman discovers that residents find community dispersed throughout the world. Survey and intensive interviewing of local residents identified networks of kin, intimates, and friends. These reported relationships allowed the research team to map the personal communities in which residents interact. Generally, findings supported a Liberated position as well as provide some support for the Saved position. While many resident ties are found in the local area, many are found outside the area (even in other countries). Further, rather than finding ties deeply embedded in single, highly solidary groupings, individuals often have ties to more than one group which are not necessarily solidary. Residents must work to maintain their relationships and the amount of support and aid flowing through these ties are low to moderate and highly variable.

The conclusion is that perhaps all three positions associated with the Community Question exist simultaneously:

> Each model speaks to a different means of obtaining and retaining resources: direct use of formal organizations (Lost); membership in densely knit, all encompassing, solidary groups (Saved); or selective use of specialized, diversified, sparsely knit social nets (Liberated). Although one or the other may predominate in a social system, all three models are likely to be reflected in current realities to some extent. Indeed, a single personal community may well be a composite of a densely knit core cluster and some more sparsely knit ties reaching out to connect with other groups and their resources (Wellman, et al., 1988:135).

Wellman's research is an important structural demonstration that the Lost and Saved arguments' preoccupation with solidarity and local area fail to identify an important fact, that individuals often access support and resources in a liberated community that transcends local boundaries. Figure 2.1 diagrams how a liberated community might look if the personal communities diagrammed all originate from the same geographic location. Some of the

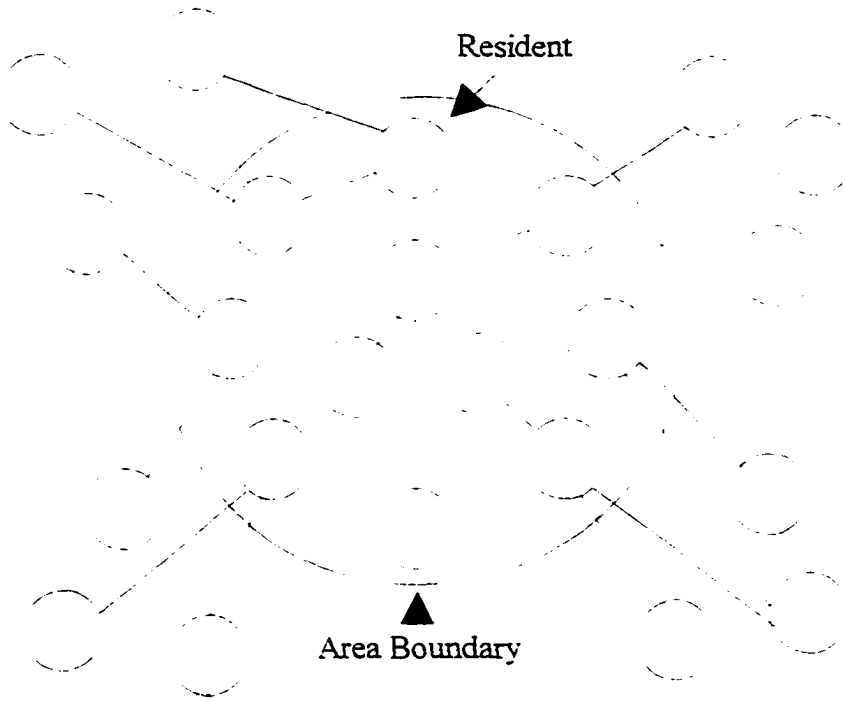


Figure 2.1: Example of map of local residents' personal communities

personal ties are to other residents within the local area, while others are to individuals who reside outside the local area. The community is "liberated" in that significant resident ties transcend local boundaries.

Although "the Liberated argument has usefully freed the Community Question from its local roots," according to Wellman (1979:1207), this freedom does not relegate consideration of the local area to the dumpster. In fact, Wellman (1996) revisited the question of geography and found that when frequency of contact was considered, more proximate relations were more frequently contacted. Wellman concludes, "the predominance of frequent contact with neighbors and workmates should lead network analysts to bring proximity back into their investigations of community, along with the existing criteria of intimacy and supportiveness" (p. 353).

Many of the interactional community studies referenced earlier have simply assumed the existence of territorially bounded local interaction. In some cases, data limitations require

this assumption, but network analysis after the fashion of Wellman and associates would provide a better sense of the interrelation of territory and interaction. Expanding the scope of interaction beyond work and intimate ties to include other interaction pattern, such as consumption, recreation, or education, would also help determine the significance of other patterns of local interaction.

**Interaction and the Local Society**

The second component of the interactional community is the local society. The local society "is the organization of social institutions and associations in the social life of the local population" (Wilkinson, 1991). Just as with territory, the persistence of a local society in the modern world is problematic. Warren (1978), who takes a systems approach to community, helps one understand the local society. The systems approach identifies important elements of the local society, focusing on the order, interdependence and functions of various institutions and organizations within the community (Warren, 1978; Bates and Bacon, 1972). Warren (1978) defines the community as the social units and systems that perform the major locality relevant social functions. The community system is a stable, integrated whole meeting the needs of the local population. In this section, the importance of exploring the implications of a less-than-complete local society and stratification of the local society are discussed as two necessary focuses of the interactional perspective.

With the "Great Change," where macro-systems have grown more dominant and important in the local community, Warren directs attention to the significance of vertical and horizontal ties among and between local and extra-local units and institutions. The decline of the complete local society in the face of increasing vertical linkages significantly challenges a systems conception of community (although Bender (1978) and Wilkinson (1991) question the accuracy of there ever being a *complete* community system). An interactional approach finds community in the varying levels of interaction in the local society rather than requiring

an independent and complete system. This is not to say the interactional community is unaffected by a decline of the local society. The absence of all or most institutions associated with locality-relevant functions, such as businesses, schools, local government, churches or voluntary support groups, can hamper interaction and limit the emergence of an interactional community. Wilkinson argues this point, noting the lack of local material density may hamper the development of "weak ties" (Granovetter, 1973) in rural places and severely limit development of community. Comparative analysis of the level of interaction found in rural communities with varying completeness of a local society would aid in determining the relationship between the local society and degree of local interaction.

Hunter's (1975) investigation of the community lost hypothesis in an urban neighborhood found the persistence of community despite the decline of local facility use (arguably a proxy for the local society) over the period of 1949 to 1974. The facilities included grocery shopping, small purchases, church, movies, doctor visits, banking, and employment. Hunter finds that informal neighboring interaction, such as chatting with neighbors, exchanging favors, visiting in homes, and asking advice remained the same and in some cases increased during the period even as facility use declined. Interestingly, the regression model showed a significant relationship between local facility use and informal neighboring, revealing that greater local facility use led to greater informal neighboring that occurred. Although Hunter's research was not intended to support the interactional perspective, it provides support for thinking that the local society and informal friendship/neighboring are interrelated with implications for the existence of the interactional community.

Figure 2.2 is a simple illustration of the structure of interaction among residents and interaction associated with various institutions and organizations. Residents maintain personal relations with other local residents as well as personal ties outside the community. Residents also have interactions associated with various local and extra-local institutions.

For example, the local church may be an important site of resident interaction; the local grocery store may also be a daily interactional site. Some residents may work outside the community and have job-related interactions outside of the local community. To the extent that this interaction is territorially bounded, two central components of the interactional community exist (territory and interaction in the local society).

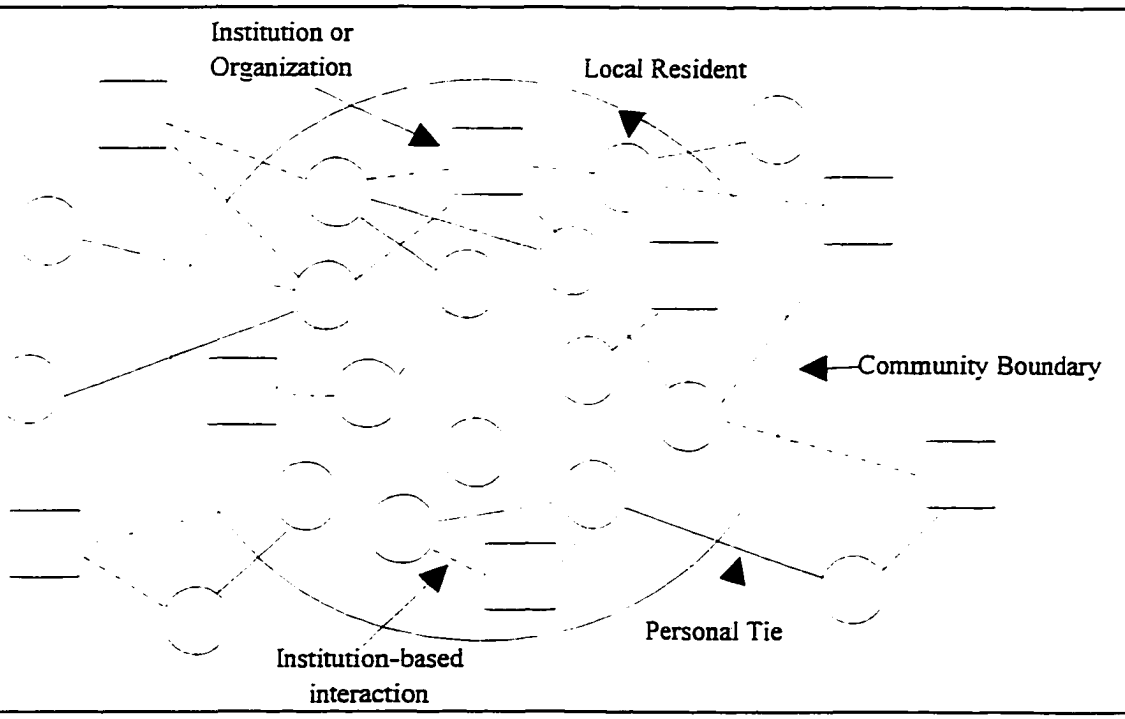


Figure 2.2: Example of residents' personal and institutional interaction in the local society

There is an interesting but somewhat obscure, *Rural Sociology* article by Freilich (1963) that formally links the geographic community with facets of interaction in the local society.[8] He maps the local interaction in various community centers and argues that the associations and interactions occuring at the centers and the relationship among various centers are important for a local interaction culture (community) to exist. In Frielich's work there is interactional mapping similar to what is proposed in Figure 2.2. Examples of

[8] Frielich's ideas do receive some detailed discussion in Poplin's community text (1979), but little reference in other community and structural analysis literature.

interactional sites identified in his study of a rural Trinidad community include the rum shop, the cemetery, the school and the water pumps.

The findings of Wellman (1996), Hunter (1975) and Freilich (1963) illustrate the need for systematic examination of the components of the local society necessary to sustain the interactional community. Whether informal "floating" sites are sufficient or fixed sites such as community centers, churches, bars, or restaurants are necessary is a question to be answered by interactional community researchers.

While the completeness of the local society is a relevant question, another important concern pertains to the segregation of the local community. The interactional community literature does not explore the issue of segregation, stratification, or power within the local society, but these are important issues to consider. Referring back to the Figure 2.2, one might find that patterns of interaction among local residents and institutions are structured into relatively distinct groupings with little interaction across groups. Further, one might find where certain groupings have easier or more direct access to important community resources than other groupings. Consider Figure 2.3, which identifies an example of local residents sharing a common geographic space but composed of two distinct groups with little interaction among group members. Relatively autonomous local institutions are also associated with each respective group. The basis for such an interactional structure might be associated with race, ethnicity, religion or class. The implications of such segregated interaction patterns may limit the third component of the interactional community—the community bond—or the potential for successful community action, both of which are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

A related issue is the possibility that within the local society, regardless of completeness, access to and control of institutions, organizations, and even fixed interactional sites may be limited to certain local subpopulations. Wilkinson notes the

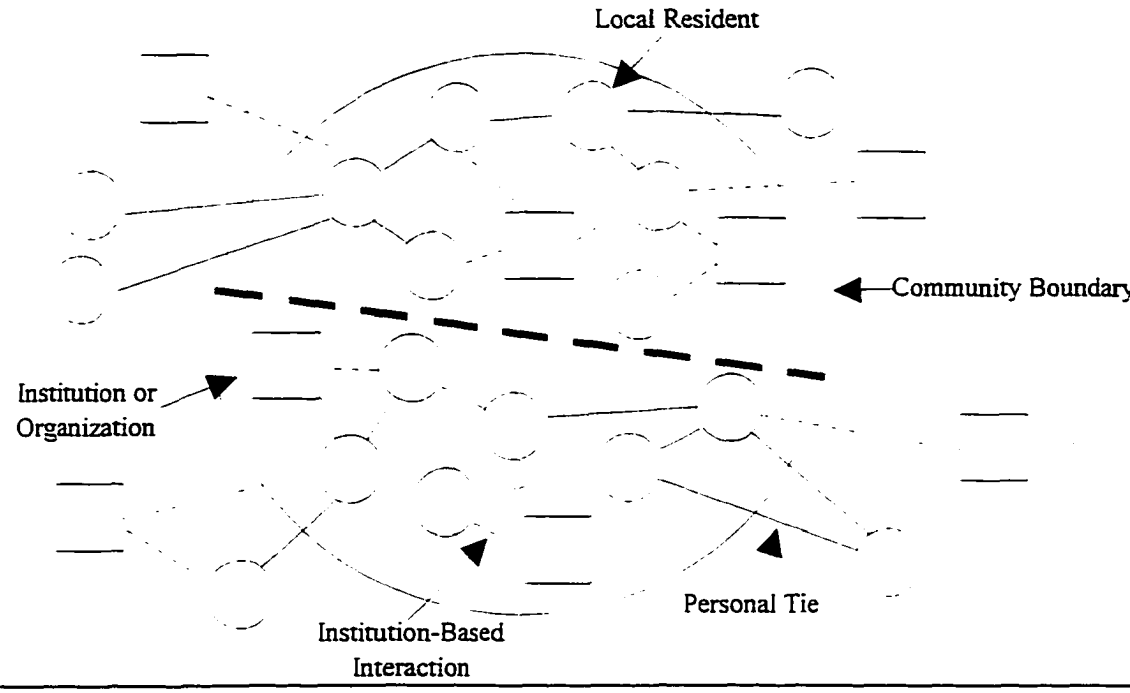


Figure 2.3: Example of stratified interaction patterns

importance of power and diversity (1991:4-6), but does not incorporate these issues into the interactional perspective. Luloff (1990), an interactional community adherent, contends that if the "prevailing system and structure discourages the democratic participation of all members of a society, then potentials for action may be stymied or perverted" (1990:p. 226). Yet the issue of power and stratification within the interactional community has not been theoretically developed.

Stratification within local communities has been a long-standing interest in community research, much of which anecdotally identifies how stratification impedes local interaction. Vidich and Bensman (1968[1957]) identify Springdale's shack people who are isolated, even from each other, and "do not participate in community affairs at any level, including voting" (p.70). In one of two case studies, Duncan and Lamborghini's (1994) informants "suggested that the elite in the Appalachian community generally had little contact with the poor and thus little basis on which to feel empathy" (p. 453). In one Maryland county seat town, Ramsey (1996) found the elites historically had held exclusive

power while remaining isolated from the general community. In each of these examples, stratified interaction patterns significantly limited the resources available to some groups within the community.

Community power research provide a number of structural approaches for understanding local stratification and power arrangements that can inform the interactional community perspective. Hunter's (1953) study of Atlanta is a seminal work for both the use of network techniques and its support of an elite perspective of community power. Perrucci and Pilisuk (1970) make an innovative contribution to the community power dialogue by examining the basis of power resulting from holding strategic positions in the interorganizational leadership structure (see also, Beaulieu and Ryan, 1985; Perrucci and Lewis, 1989; Mizruchi and Galaskiewicz, 1993). Studies of interlocking directorates, largely conducted at the national level, also have been utilized to explain the arrangement of power in some urban and national settings (Ratcliff, et al., 1979; also Friedland and Palmer, 1984, for a general review of community power and structure). Finally, one of the most comprehensive structural analyses of community power, interaction structures, and collective decision-making is the multi-nation study of Laumann, Pappi and associates (Laumann and Pappi, 1973, 1976; Laumann, Marsden and Galaskiewicz, 1977; and Galaskiewicz, 1979a, 1979b). Their case studies of the German community of Altneustadt and the American communities of Towertown and River City examine the leader and organizational structures through which information, money, and support flow.

Community power research has declined considerably since its prime nearly 30 years ago, limited by a general failure to adequately answer the question "so what?"[9] (although many of the community power literature identified above attempts to explain why structure matters). For the interactional community perspective, a question to ponder might be what

[9] Also methodological problems and an inability to integrate the various findings into a larger explanation of community power were key challenges.

are the implications of one type of local power structure as opposed to another. Results are mixed as different structures are found to contribute to collective outcomes. There is support for an elite structure being associated with collective action success (Hawley, 1963; Smith, 1976), and there also is support for a pluralist/coalitional structure being associated with collective action success (Aiken, 1970; Clark, 1968) The structural case studies of Luamann and associates found that in their pluralist, coalitional structure, the more powerful coalition was the most likely to prevail in a controversial decision (Laumann, and Pappi, 1976).

One finding of the community power literature that can be integrated into this discussion is a taxonomy for labeling the different power structures that exist, each of which represents a different power of interaction within the institutional structure of the local society. Different taxonomic continuums have been proposed (Rossi, 1960; Walton,1970). Aiken's review (1970) of community power case studies uses the four categories proposed by Walton (1970), reflecting a continuum from a centralized to decentralized structure. The four categories include a pyramidal, factional, coalitional, and amorphous leadership structure (Aiken, 1970) The first three exhibit some structure while an amorphous pattern is relatively unstructured. According to Aiken (1970) power is concentrated with a single, cohesive leadership group in a pyramidal structure. In a factional structure, two or more durable factions compete for power. A coalitional structure would have a variety of leaders associated with various issues who work together in fluid coalitions. Finally, an amorphous structure would have no persistent pattern of power.

Figure 2.4 contains illustrations of possible pyramidal, coalitional, and amorphous structures. The pyramidal (or elite) structure is composed of a group of leaders who may or may not be associated with leading community institutions. These leaders can access and direct resources within these institutions with relative autonomy as individuals or groups outside the elite structure have little influence in the structure. The coalitional (or pluralist)

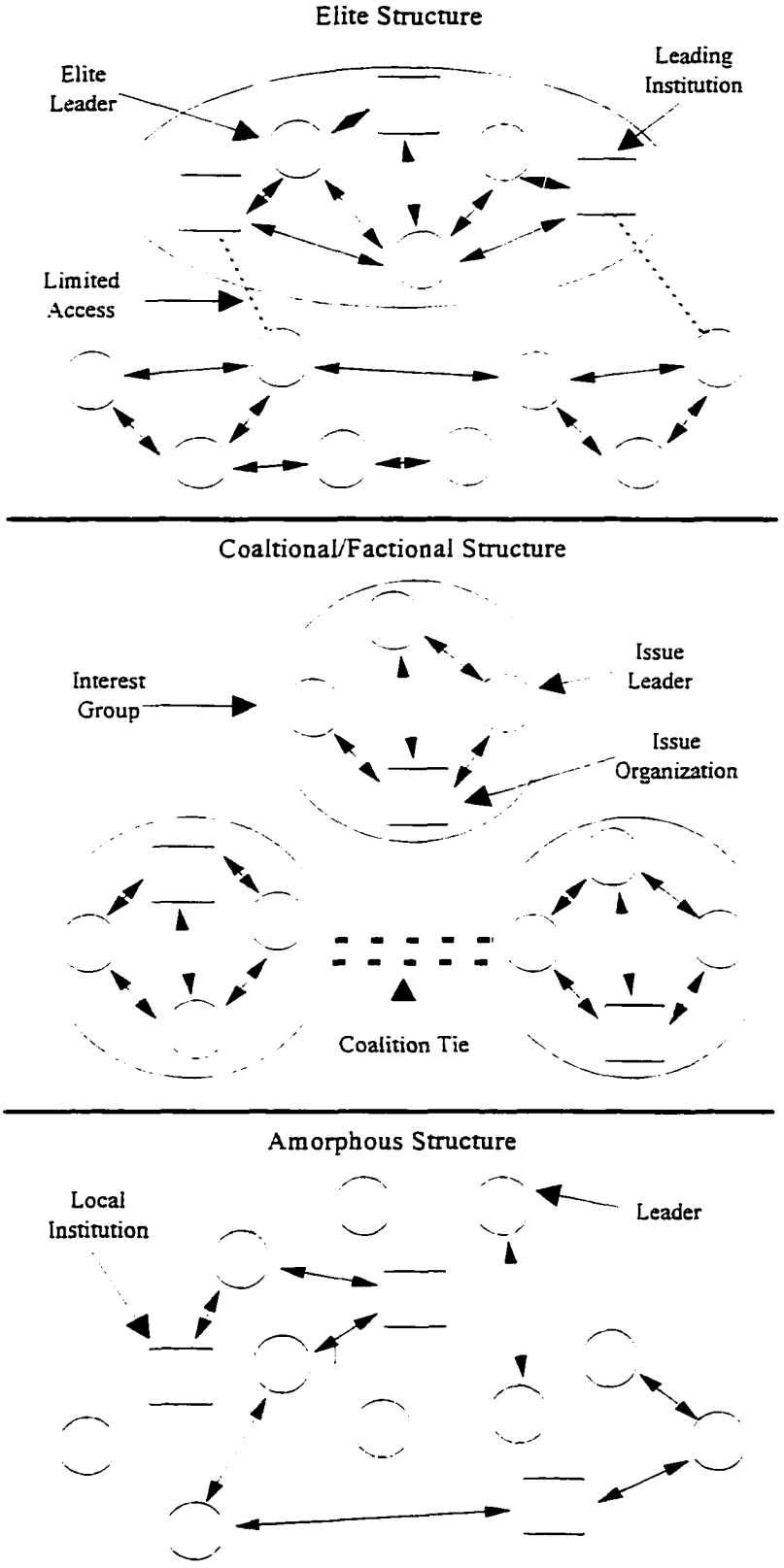


Figure 2.4: Illustrations of power structure, centralized to decentralized

structure depicted identifies three interest groups of individuals and an association who have developed some coalitions among themselves to work collectively. The amorphous structure has no distinguishable institutional or individual structure. Linkages among individuals and institutions have no conscious purpose. The implications of some of these structural arrangements of power within a community's local society will be discussed in further detail in a later section pertaining to community action.

Two important structural issues pertaining to the local society and the interactional community perspective have been broached in this section. First, there is a need to examine the extent of community interaction that exists within less-than-complete local societies. Second there is a need to examine interaction patterns within the community to determine whether they are generally uniform or whether there is stratification of the local society. Stratification can either appear in the form of segregated local populations or power structures which limit access by some segments of the population. The significance of these structural concerns become evident in the next four sections concerning the community bond and community action.

### Solidarity and the Interactional Perspective

Local interaction and territory provide an incomplete picture of the interactional community without discussion of the third important component, a solidary bond. The elemental bond is probably the most complicated and controversial component of the interactional community.[10] The existence of a community bond requires a dose of social psychology with an interactive sensitivity. "The elemental bond occurs in social interactions, specifically in interactions that embody and express mutual interests in the common life of a local population" (Wilkinson, 1991:14). There are at least three explanations of the elemental bond with an interactional orientation. Wilkinson takes a symbolic interactionist

[10] Wellman (1979) outright rejects the necessity of solidary bonds as necessary for community to persist.

approach, drawing on Mead (1934) as well as Tönnies (1957[1887]) and Schmalenbach (1961); Miller (1992) draws on Habermas and communicative action; while Knoke (1990b) tentatively turns to the sociology of emotions for guidance.[11]

According to Wilkinson (1991), the "elemental social bond consists of shared meanings among participants in processes of social interaction" (p. 16). This shared meaning influences human volition as individuals respond to their shared connection. Concern for human volition logically leads to Tönnies work on natural and rational will, although Wilkinson argues that community is neither rational or natural but is simply a fact of sharing a common life—a natural state experienced regardless of volition.[12] When consciously recognized and emotionally responded to, community has gemeinschaft-like qualities. Of particular interest are the gemeinschaft-like interactions which express shared interest in the local community. Impediments to the emergence of this shared bond can restrict the development and conscious experiencing of community. The shared meaning emerging from symbolic interaction and the taken-for-granted fact of sharing a common life give rise to the community. Regardless of whether community is consciously recognized or acted upon, it affects social processes of day-to-day life.[13]

An important qualification of Wilkinson's idea of the community bond is that it need not imply only positive local interaction. Symbolic interaction can be both conflictual as well as cooperative. Wilkinson (1991) concludes:

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[11] An interesting fourth perspective which will not be elaborated is the Marxist and ethnic identity approach of Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) for explaining bounded solidarity. While they include embeddedness in the title of their article, their approach draws on the whole range of sociological theory rather than specific structural thinking. While a Marxist approach may be useful, their work is not an interactional or structural approach consistent with the general orientation of this chapter.

[12] The term "natural state' is not to be confused with the natural state in Hobbes and Lockes "state of nature." Community is a natural state of individuals living in multiplex relationships with other individuals. Community in this sense is an unconscious fact of life (Schmelanbach, 1961).

[13] Bell (1998) also uses Tönnies to explain the basis of solidarity, but takes a somewhat different tact than Wilkinson. Bell posits that it is the interplay between a solidarity of sentiment (gemeinschaft-like association) and a solidarity of interest (gesellschaft-like association) which creates the trust necessary for collective action.

> Community implies all types of relations that are natural among people, and if interaction is suppressed, community is limited. The unsuppressed flow of human interaction, regulated naturally by the requirements of interaction itself (e.g., by the necessity to give and receive symbolic messages and to take the perspective of the other in understanding self and others), is the elemental stuff of which community is made (p. 17).

Wilkinson's explanation is both complicated and challenging to validate. To adequately explore symbolic interaction giving rise to a shared bond requires extensive qualitative research similar to Hummon's (1990) exploration of community ideology and identity. However, rather than focus on the beliefs, values, and ideologies, as Hummon does, an interactional approach focuses on interactions that contribute to the development of a shared, symbolic bond among residents in a particular territory.

Wilkinson does not struggle alone in attempting to explain the interactive processes which build community solidarity. The importance of a "communal" bond also is important to Miller's (1992) explanation of community and collective action. Miller rejects a weak rational choice approach[14] since collective action seen as the outcome of rational individuals "portrays human beings as, in essence, manipulative"( p. 23). He argues instead that "moral bonds and collective identities form the basis of collective action (p. 29)." These communal bonds parallel Habermas's (1989: 1984) ideas of the life world and communicative action. Communal bonds are the result of communicative interaction and a shared awareness of life.[15]

Knoke (1990b) provides a third approach for understanding the basis of collective action. He identifies an affective bonding as an important basis for action along with rational and normative motivations. Interpersonal, affective bonding represents an important

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[14] A weak rational choice approach to collective action views communities of rational actors working collectively for strategic ends, limited somewhat by normative sanctioning. This is in contrast to a traditional rational choice approach where there is no normative sanctioning and free-riding is a significant issue (Miller, 1992).

[15] Paralleling Schmallenbach's (1961) idea of communion, which Wilkinson relies on. Communion is a term to connote the conscious recognition of the shared feeling of community among residents.

component of group solidarity, emerging from interaction. An emotional bond may remain subconscious but is capable of being a strong motivation within individuals. Knoke, a leading structural analyst, is plowing new ground with the inclusion of affective bonding into his structural perspective—but he is recognizing the possibilities of the elemental bond for community action.

Whether the elemental bond is the result of symbolic interaction, shared identity resulting from communicative action, or affective/emotional psychological bonds developing from on-going interaction, the bond is important in that it gives local interaction psychological coherence as a community. All three of the perspectives struggle to explain a social psychological process of shared meanings as they become embedded in the individual and mediate individual action in a community. Elaboration of the process of how this bond develops and exactly what influence it has on action is clearly needed. For purposes of this dissertation, the approach is to view interaction as a necessary component for the emergence of an affective, gemeinschaft-like bond that can be expressed in the form of community action.

### Community Action, Social Fields and the Community Field

A great strength of the interactional community perspective is its illumination of the process of community action. An enhanced structural sensitivity is proposed as an important elaboration to increase understanding of the process of action and the means of improving the capacity of a community to act.

The significance of the solidary bond emerging from social interaction can be found in community action. Wikinson (1991) links the idea of a solidary bond and community action since community action is viewed as the conscious expression of the bond. A central thesis of the interactional perspective is that "the elemental bond occurs in social interactions, specifically in interactions that embody and express mutual interests in the common life of a

local population" (p. 14). Community action represents the interaction expressing this mutual interest. Outside of community action, the shared bond is virtually invisible in day-to-day community life.

The social field concept was introduced earlier as an important interactional concept. According to Wilkinson (1991):

> As a dynamic process, a social field is a sequence of acts displaying unity through time, and this process has constantly changing elements and structure. The process includes actors, associations, and activities. The interactions in a process have unity by virtue of the interconnections among the acts of various actors. These interconnections occur as the acts express shared interests. This obviously is a tenuous unity, however; it is tenuous because of the emergent, dynamic and boundless qualities of an interaction field. Given the vast array of forces that can affect the flow of social interaction, one can never know exactly what will happen next as the field moves from one state of unity to another. Individuals and groups, asserting private and shared purposes, can attempt with varying degrees of success to direct the flow of the process in a particular direction, but their control is never complete. Interaction inevitably brings novelty to the process (88-89).

Figure 2.5 contains a series of diagrams illustrating the dynamic flow of possible interactions within a social field. The particular interest is not identified, but two stages in the process are noted. Various stages of an action process have been identified in the literature, one common delineation includes five stages: awareness, organization, decision, resource mobilization, and resource application (Wilkinson, 1970b).[16] Specific tasks associated with each of these stages include: development of interest, development of an organizing association, development of a strategy, recruitment of necessary resources (such as money, information or support), and implementation. The two phases of action shown in the diagram illustrate how different residents and institutions/organizations may interact within the social field during different phases. In this particular example, outside individuals and institutions are also drawn into the social field.

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[16] Other stage sequences have been proposed. Poplin (1979) compares four: Holland et al.(1957); Kaufman (1959); Green and Mayo (1953); and Warren (1973).

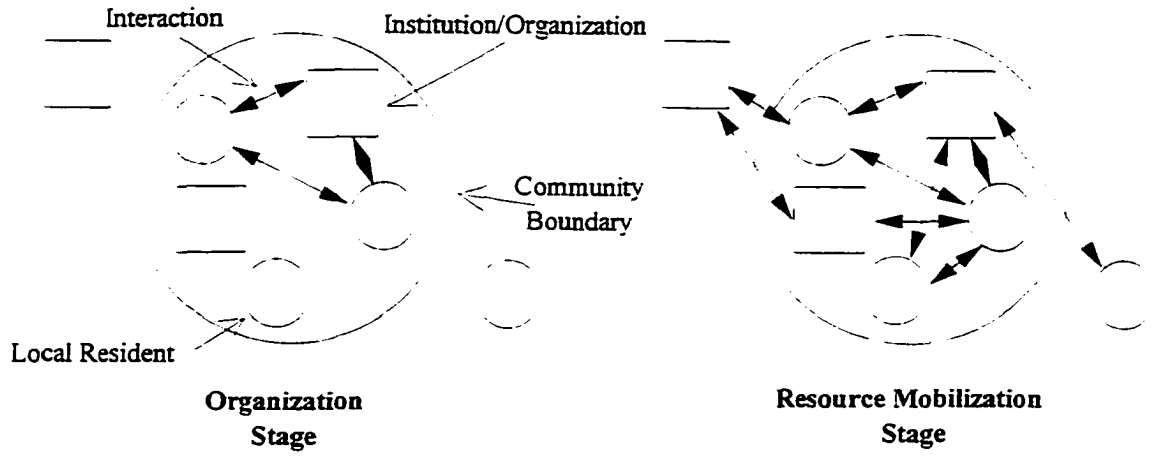


Figure 2.5: Interaction across two phases of action within a social field

To the extent that a social field is locality oriented, one can label the process community action. A locally oriented action would be one that serves a more general community interest rather than specific private interests; although the degree of locality orientation can be a fuzzy one to determine. Luloff (1990) suggests six criteria for evaluating the community orientation of an action:[17]

1. The degree of comprehensiveness of the interest pursued and needs met,
2. the degree to which the action is identified with the locality,
3. the relative number, status, and degree of involvement of local residents in the action process,
4. the relative number and significance of local associations involved in the action,
5. the degree to which the action changes or maintains the local society, and
6. the extent of organization of the action. (p. 220)

As an example, consider a social field directed toward the development of upper-income housing in conjunction with a private golf course and organized by a realtor and a few local residents. The social field meets limited needs, is not a community project, involves a limited number of individuals, involves no local associations and the change to the local society may actually increase stratification of the local society. This social field would be

[17] His list is developed from a number of other assessments of local action characteristics (Kaufman, 1959; Sutton and Kolaja, 1960; and Green and Mayo, 1953).

identified as having a very low community orientation. On the other hand, an effort to build and maintain a community-owned movie theater with numerous civic and governmental organizations involved as well as the involvement of a cross-section of local residents has a high level of community orientation. Because of its high community orientation, the action in this social field would be labeled community action.

A special type of field, the community field, is a very important process of social interaction emerging in some communities. Rather than directed toward a specific interest, the community field represents an interactional field that coordinates action and helps generalize the community interest across the special interests of social fields. Through generalized community leadership, informal networking and formal coordinating efforts, the general community interest can be instilled in respective social fields. As a field, the community field is unbounded and its structure is constantly changing (see Wilkinson, 1991:87-98 for additional detail).

Figure 2.6 illustrates a possible community field at one moment in time within a community. The community field may consist of an array of interactive processes, such as communication and cooperation among social fields, which help raise awareness of different interests and shape a shared community-wide interest across social fields. Some leaders facilitate interaction by helping to create bridges across social fields and facilitating interaction within the community field. In some communities, an organization may be created where representatives of various social fields and generalized leaders interact. A community field may also be strengthened during the course of a community action through the elevation of consciousness and interaction among citizens, leaders, and organizations across social fields as they gain a greater sense of the common community interest. New social fields might also emerge from the community field as problems are identified and acted upon in an organized fashion. For example, communication among economic development, education, and health care organizations and leaders may identify child care as

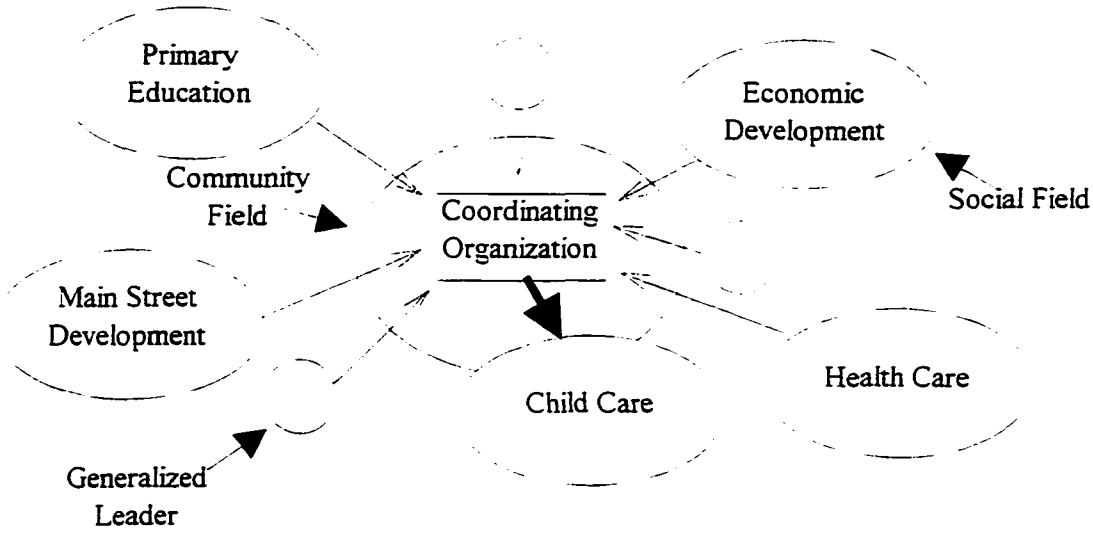


Figure 2.6: Community field and action emerging from cooperation across social fields

an important community issue requiring joint action. A new organization might be created and resources mobilized from a number of sources to address the problem.

Wilkinson (1991) adheres to a definition of community development directly related to the community field: "Ccommunity development occurs when people attempt purposively to increase or to reinforce the generality of interactional relationships among their various fields of locality oriented action" (p. 92). This is a decidedly structural approach to community development where there is conscious development of either mechanisms or organizations to create interaction that contributes to the emergence of a community field. Wilkinson's definition is arguably too restrictive—confined to structural development of the community field. A more appropriate definition would expand beyond structural development of the community field (generalized community interaction) to include structural development of community action within respective social fields (specific interest oriented action) and development of components of the interactional community itself (such as the interaction within the local society or the affective bond).

Development of community action stages in a social field (see Figure 2.5) could take the form of improving linkages among organizations and individual participants in the action process. Increasing the diversity of participants or expanding the number of institutions with some stake in the action could also be a form of development. To develop the interactional community (Figure 2.2), efforts to build interaction among sub-groups could help build the bond and linkages which might strengthen the community bond and later give rise to community action or improvements of the community field. Creation of public spaces (fixed interactional sites in Freilich's (1963) terminology) that could become interaction centers or encourage the development of new social organizations might be examples of developing local interaction and the general community. In summary, community development of the interactional community as defined by this dissertation include efforts to improve the structure of interaction within the general community, the social fields, and the community field. Structural improvements include creating new interaction, improving the quality of existing interaction, and developing generalized community interaction. In the next two section, contemporary interest in concepts such as social capital and social infrastructure will be examined as tools for assessing and developing structural aspects of the interactional community.

## Social Capital & Community Action

In the next two sections, two phrases which have recently entered the academic and community development lexicon are discussed as concepts that can aid in the structural development of the interactional community. Social capital has captured the attention of the public and academic communities while social infrastructure has found support in community development practice. Utilization of either phrase as a community concept is an explicit acknowledgement that the structure and character of a resident, an organization, and leadership interaction in the community have implications for community well-being.

Recent scholarly work examining institutional and economic transactions (North, 1990; Siles, Hanson, and Robinson, 1994), educational attainment (Smith, et al., 1995; Coleman, 1988) child behavior problems and cognitive development (Parcel and Menaghan, 1993, 1994), and development (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993; Sanders and Nee, 1996), share a common interest in the influence of social relations and social structure on collective outcomes. Social capital recognizes that the structure of social interaction varies across time and space and affects individual and group well-being. Still in its formative stages as a concept, the term has received limited *theoretical* elaboration as a place-based community concept.

Currently, there are two leading social capital perspectives—a rational actor approach and a structural or embedded approach. The utility of social interaction for the individual is central to the rational actor approach, while a structural/embedded approach emphasizes the importance of the social structure in which interaction is embedded. Coleman, a leading social capital thinker, purports to include components of a rational and normative approach in his perspective, but his approach has a decidedly rational tendency (1988; 1990; 1993). For classical rational choice theorists, group outcomes result from the aggregation of individual actions mediated by available information, hierarchy of individual preferences, opportunity costs, and institutional constraints (Friedman and Hechter 1988). Social capital then becomes "the value of these aspects of social structure to actors as resources that they can use to achieve their interests" (Coleman 1988:S101). Fundamental to this definition is the primacy of the individual and individual desires[18]. Coleman (1990) outlines how trustworthiness and outstanding obligations are a form of social capital available in varying degrees to actors. For example, a legislator can develop an array of obligations from other legislators that can in

[18] Some rational choice theorists have attempted to move beyond micro-analysis of individual behavior to make sense of how there can be group solidarity despite the likelihood of individual free-riding. For example, while explaining group solidarity in the production of public goods remains problematic, Hechter (1987) offers an explanation of group solidarity emerging from the production of goods which are quasi-public in that it is possible to exclude noncontributers from consumption of the good produced.

turn be used to advance a particular issue (p. S103). Norms and information channels are other aspects of social capital elaborated by Coleman.

An alternative to rational choice theory explains social capital as emerging out of social relations that are embedded in on-going structures of interaction. Social relations are viewed as contextual and these relationships create predispositions and vice versa. Granovetter (1985) contrasts the "under-socialized" (rational) view of individuals with an "over-socialized" (normative) view then follows a middle course with the embedded approach. He argues embedded social relations are integral for understanding economic transactions where malfeasance is overcome. Using an embedded-like approach, Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) define social capital as "expectations for action within a collectivity that affect the economic goals and goal-seeking behavior of its members, even if these expectations are not oriented toward the economic sphere" (p. 1323). They are careful to identify that social structure can have negative as well as positive impacts on behavior. For example, group expectations can stifle members' actions as easily as encourage it. Thus, from a structural perspective, it is important to not only identify the structure of interaction but examine the content and character of this interaction as well. For example, in an early work, Coleman (1957) posits that in a community with a high level of social involvement, controversy can more likely be resolved democratically when than in a community with a more stratified interactive structure where conflict is antagonistic.

Formal theorizing of social capital as a structural characteristic of place-based communities is not clear in Granovetter or Portes and Sensenbrenner's work. Putnam (1993a; 1993b), a political scientist, clearly endorses the idea of a place-based social capital. He defines social capital as "features of social organization, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit." (35-36). Putnam is clear about social capital's contribution to place-based action contending that "voluntary cooperation is easier in a community that has inherited a substantial stock of social capital, in

the form of norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement" (1993a:167). Putnam identifies social capital as a key ingredient that explains the civic and economic development of northern Italy compared to the less developed southern regions of Italy. While not providing a theoretical basis for viewing social capital as a place-based phenomenon, Putnam's analysis has captured the public's attention and elevated interest in social structure.

A theoretical justification for community social capital may be drawn from the interactional community perspective. Although social capital is abstract because "it inheres in the structure of relations within which purposive action takes place" (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993:1322), Coleman (1988) argues that social capital be defined by its function. "It is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors—whether persons or corporate actors—within the structure" (p. S98). In the case of the interactional community, geographically based networks of interaction and the development of an affective, gemeinschaft-like bond are the underpinnings for the expression of local solidarity in community action. *Therefore, community social capital resides within the structure and quality of social interaction that gives rise to community action. Structurally, community social capital depends on the prevalence and consistency of social interaction within the community. Qualitatively, the issue is the degree to which social interaction acquires a gemeinschaft-like, affective character.*

The basic structural question of quantity can be empirically assessed through comparative analysis of the on-going interaction within several communities. This might include examination of personal networks of social support, patterns of local consumption/production, or patterns of involvement in various social fields. The question of the degree of local interaction necessary for the development of a common bond and eventual community-wide action is an important consideration for which there currently is no answer. The qualitative question—emergence of a gemeinschaft-like bond—is difficult to assess but

requires consideration of the tenor of interaction. Trust is one generally recognized form of social capital (Grannovtter, 1985; Colemen, 1988; Putnam, 1993a) associated with the character of community interaction.[19]

To summarize, networks of interaction and the gemeinschaft-like bond (trust being one aspect of the bond) are important characteristics of social structure that impact the emergence of community solidarity and the pursuit of community action, thus meeting both of Coleman's criteria for the emergence of social capital (*social structure* that *facilitates action*).

## Social Infrastructure and Community Action

While social capital can be a useful concept for communicating the resource potential of social structure for community action, social infrastructure can be a useful concept for examining the structure of the community action process itself. Social infrastructure is an idea that recognizes social structure as a type of infrastructure that can be intentionally improved or created (consistent with the process orientation of the interactional community perspective). In an earlier section, structural characteristics of social fields, the community field, and community action were illustrated; in this section systematic classification of important structural attributes that can be altered will be discussed as aspects of social infrastructure.

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[19] Granovetter argues that trust in economic transactions develops from past experience and first-hand knowledge of the individual with whom the transaction is being conducted; trust is a product of social relations. This makes intuitive sense where transactions include few participants who all have first hand knowledge of one another, but how can there be such a thing as community or collective trust where all residents are not known. Supplementing an embedded explanation of trust are organizational theorists, such as Kramer, et al. (1996), who argue that the preconditions for trust emerge from group identification. Their experiments (Kramer and Brewer, 1984) reveal that group identification positively influenced consumption of communal resources. Because group members cannot know everyone, the decision to trust is a result of cognitive (self-categorized group identification), motivational (perception of material and psychological benefits), and affective (hedonic rewards for trusting) processes within the individual which determine the inclination to trust or not to trust when confronted with a collective action problem (Kramer, et al., 1996: 366-371).

Flora and Flora (1993) identify three qualities of what they call entrepreneurial social infrastructure: diversity of symbols; resource mobilization; and quality of linkages. They do not conceptualize social infrastructure in interactional community terms, although their applied and proactive orientation is consistent with Kaufman and Wilkinson. Where social infrastructure exists, they argue, communities are better able to maximize the resource potential of local diversity. For example, a community where differing citizen perspectives are accepted can access a broader range of choices when making decisions compared to a community rife with conflict. Communities capable of mobilizing resources from a host of public and private sources also will be better equipped to act than communities unwilling or incapable of accessing these resources. Further communities that engage traditionally marginal pockets of the community, such as members with disabilities, retirees, those living in poverty, or members of a various ethnic, racial or gender groups, will likely access additional resources. Finally, the inclusiveness and diversity of linkages among local citizens and organizations as well as the existence of diverse extra-local linkages contribute to the flow of information, money, and support within the community.

Recent studies of social infrastructure suggest promise for the concept. A national study of rural communities (Flora, et al., 1997) found several dimensions of social infrastructure associated with successful community action. Significant relationships were found between the execution of an economic development project and the presence of a newspaper which reports community affairs fairly and with attention to the differing citizens' views (diversity of symbols), local banks contributing to the community (resource mobilization), and existing extra-local horizontal and vertical linkages (quality of linkages). Several case studies have also found the social infrastructure concept to be useful, including a comparative case study of two Illinois communities (Salamon, 1996). Salamon determined that state-directed resources were maximally used by the community with a higher level of social infrastructure. The various elements of social infrastructure considered in her study

included treatment of newcomers, community support of local businesses, conflict management, and community support of youth and schools.

One example of structural analysis corroborating a social infrastructure orientation is found in the work of Turk (1973, 1977). Turk examined the structural conditions for action and the flow of resources through internal community linkages. He found that diverse regulating and coordinating organizations, consensual solidarity among organizations, and greater internal linkages within organizations enabled them to better access external resources. The absence of direct measures of local structure in the communities studied limited this research, although the theoretical perspective adheres to the belief that organizational structure can limit or facilitate local action.

Social infrastructure's emphasis on group-level interactive qualities of action is a lens which emphasizes the diversity, inclusiveness, and tolerance of the structures depicted in the earlier figures of social fields and the community field. A social infrastructure orientation is sensitive to the possibility that a social or community field can be defined exclusively or without debate by a limited segment of the community. This does not mean all actions emerging from an exclusive field are in opposition to the community interest (although some actions could be), but there may be important ideas excluded which may improve the action. Social infrastructure also directs attention to the assessment of interactive network structures and encourages development of new networks where necessary by, for example developing interaction structures which include groups omitted from important decision-making, resource mobilization, or implementation processes. Finally, social infrastructure is concerned with how tolerant or accepting various structures are of diversity and how conflict between organized fields is handled.

One of the primary ways of improving community social infrastructure is to overcome structural barriers to local interaction among distinct community subpopulatons (figure 2.3) or decrease the hierarchical stratification of the locality (figure 2.4). Racial, ethnic, religious or

economic diversity in a community may contribute to the existence of relatively autonomous and isolated social fields. The centripetal tension across subgroups as they pursue independent interests could emphasize the special interests of particular sub-populations at the expense of community-wide betterment. Private interests may even conflict with overall community well-being as demonstrated, for instance, with local growth machines (Logan and Molotch, 1987) that act to maximize exchange values for elites at the expense of the use values of residents. The structure of community power and decision-making processes must therefore be scrutinized to determine how the structure facilitates or restricts the flow of resources and benefits in the community.

Once the structure has been identified, improvement of social infrastructure requires strategic rather than random alterations of the social structure. Figure 2.7 helps to illustrate this point with a map of a social field encompassing only a portion of a community. Efforts to improve social infrastructure by developing type A linkages lead to denser links among elements already involved in the process of action. These linkages may result in little improvement of the action process since they simply reinforce already existing associational patterns. New linkages of type B connect the action process to a portion of the community which was previously not connected to the social field.[20] There are two implications of this type of linkage development: First, the social field has expanded to include the views of previously unconnected portions of the community which may lead to a greater community orientation of the action. Second, previously untapped resources may be tapped by the new action process. Linkages of the B-type may also contribute to the development of a community field, a point elaborated in Figure 2.6.

Recalling the various power structures illustrated in Figure 2.4, there may be strengths and weaknesses of each identified structural arrangement. Thinking of structure as

[20] In rational, formal network terms—the point being illustrated is comparable to Burt's (1992) idea of structural holes and structural equivalence.

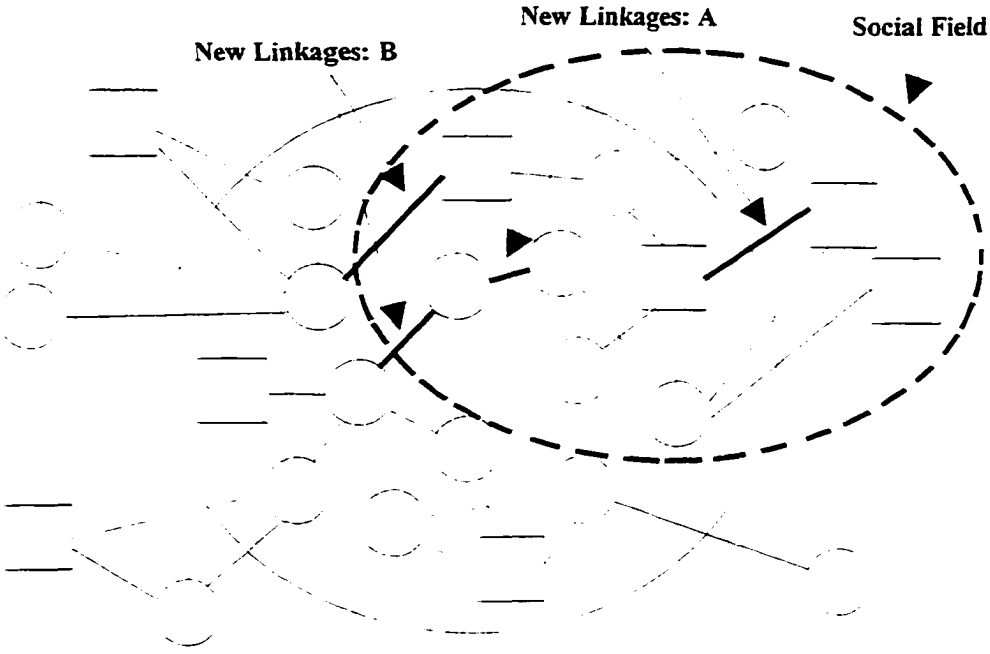


Figure 2.7: Development of social infrastructure—linkage development

a form of social infrastructure, however, leads one to the conclusion that increased linkages between elite individuals and institutions to excluded citizens and associations may increase the resource base accessed, which in turn may lead to an action having a higher degree of local orientation with the input of more diverse elements. In the case of the amorphous and coalitional structures increasing the density of linkages in the entire structure may facilitate the flow of communication and resources through the entire structure. Also, the creation of a coordinating organization (community field) that links the coalitions or unorganized institutions and individuals will help facilitate communication and coordination for action. Linkage development alone may not be sufficient for improving social infrastructure if the general organizational culture is intolerant and unwilling to accept the diversity that may benefit community action. If this is the case, improving the social infrastructure will require overcoming prejudices or developing conflict resolution mechanisms that allow for conflicting views without the emergence of debilitating antagonism between community factions (see Coleman, 1957).

Social infrastructure and social capital are two concepts that have utility for the interactional community and direct attention to facets of social structure, such as interaction, solidarity, social fields and community action, that can be improved. Improvement of community social capital should contribute to increased potential of residents expressing their shared bond in community action. Social infrastructure improvements should improve the action process itself. There also is interplay between the two concepts, as the structure and character of resident interaction giving rise to solidarity and action leads to organizational development which in turn may improve resident interaction structures. Putnam (1993a) suggests the same, "the greater the level of trust within a community, the greater the likelihood of cooperation. And cooperation itself breeds trust" (p. 171).

## Summary of Interactional Community Perspective and Hypotheses

This chapter has outlined three central components of the interactional community; discussion of social fields, the community field, and community action; and discussion of social capital and social infrastructure. In the final section nine principles of the interactional community perspective are presented as a way of highlighting the key points of this perspective. The section concludes with two general hypotheses generated by this theoretical discussion.

### Nine principles of the interactional community

1) The interactional community is an emergent product of social structure.
2) Local interaction patterns define the "territory" of the interactional community, although the exact boundaries of the territory may be "fuzzy" as evolution of the local society shifts the spatial pattern of interaction.
3) A complete local society is not necessary for an interactional community to exist, although the relative completeness and significance of the local society can

condition the degree of local interaction and the potential of the interactional community.

4) Segregation and/or stratification of the local structure can restrict local interaction and negatively impact the development of the interactional community.

5) Interaction embedded in the local community can give rise to a gemienschaft-like bond, or solidarity, that can be observed as community action.

6) Social fields are dynamic and emergent fields of interaction directed toward fulfillment of public or private interests. To the degree a social field is community oriented, one can label the process of interaction as community action.

7) A community field is a special type of interactional field not directed toward a specific interest, but helps generalize the community interest across social fields and helps coordinate action. In other words, a community field can help orient action toward community rather than private ends. A community field can also lead to greater coordination among individuals and local organizations and lead to increased resource mobilization.

8) Community social capital is a useful concept sensitive to the structure and quality of social interaction that gives rise to community solidarity and action. Social capital exists to the extent that there are substantial networks of local interaction that also acquire a gemeinschaft-like bond. The existence of social capital should increase the potential for community action.

9) Social infrastructure represents the bundle of structural attributes that can be improved or created to enhance the process of community action. Social infrastructure emphasizes the importance of diversity, inclusiveness, and tolerance to improve the resources (such as money, information, or support) available for collective action effort. Improvements in social infrastructure can enhance the community field or various stages in the community action process.

**Hypotheses:**

Two general hypotheses are drawn from the theoretical discussion and the above nine principles. One pertains to social capital and the basic components of the interactional community as they relate to the emergence of community action. The second pertains to social infrastructure and social fields, the community field, and the process of community action.

*Hypothesis #1*: The greater the embeddedness of local interaction in the geographic community and the greater the gemeinschaft-like bond that emerges from this interaction, the more likely community action will occur. In other words, the more social capital in the community, the more likely there is community action.

*Hypothesis #2*: The more diverse, inclusive, and tolerant are the organizational and individual patterns of association within social fields and the community field, the greater is the capacity for community action. In other words, a community with better developed social infrastructure will have increased capacity to act due to greater access to resources, ideas, and people.

In the next four chapters, the methods and analysis of three community case studies will be presented in an attempt to test the two hypotheses. The analysis focuses on structural characteristics of the community, including resident interaction patterns embedded in the community, interorganizational relations, and leadership structures in each community. Where possible, these structural attributes will be associated with community action to determine whether social capital and social infrastructure influenced the outcome. The dissertation concludes with a general discussion of the findings and their implications for community development practice and community sociology.

# CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

To test the proposed hypotheses and validate a structural approach to understanding the interactional community and community action, data are from three community case studies conducted between spring, 1996 and summer, 1997. This comparative case study approach will elucidate important structural differences between communities to distinguish the implications of varying levels or arrangements of social capital and social infrastructure on community action. Several types of data are analyzed, including survey data of local residents, network data of interlocking organizational directorates and leader consultation networks, and profiles of participation in a series of local community actions. In this chapter, the procedure for selecting the three case study communities is provided along with brief profiles of each community.

## Case Study Selection

The case studies were conducted as part of a national study of local economic development funded by the United States Department of Agriculture. Early in the study, a key informant survey of community leaders in over 2,000 rural places and counties was conducted. The survey elicited information about the community's social infrastructure and details of one recent economic development activity (if there had been one). Data from over 1,300 rural places and counties are collected. Empirical analysis of the data identified features of social infrastructure that were strongly associated with whether each community had undertaken a recent economic or community development project (see Flora, et al., 1997 for greater detail of this analysis). The case studies were originally selected to further illuminate the empirical findings of the initial key informant survey.

Three criteria were most critical for selecting case study communities. First, communities either high or low in social infrastructure were identified. Second, the existence

of recent development projects and the character of these projects was considered. Finally, communities of similar size were selected to allow for more comparable cases.

The first issue, high or low social infrastructure, was determined through examination of the seven social infrastructure indicators to be significantly related to the existence of a community project. The seven indicators were: existence of an unbiased newspaper; amicable resolution of a recent community controversy; a process for recognizing diverse student achievement; financial institutions that contributed to community projects; individual investment in community projects through either bonds or local fund-raisers; diverse leadership networks; and a diversity of extra-local community linkages. Communities that reported the existence of at least six of the seven indicators were reviewed further as possible case study sites. Communities where only two, one, or none of the indicators existed were also examined.

Telephone interviews of additional local informants and appropriate state community development/extension staff led to the selection of two communities where a moderate to high level of social infrastructure was believed to exist. The two communities were differentiated from each other by one having a history of active self-development activities and the other a history of industrial recruitment activities. An industrial recruitment activity was defined as an effort to attract an outside owned firm or firms to the community. A self-development project involves creating or expanding a firm(s) or other local income-generating activities with three important distinctions from industrial recruitment. A self-development activity involves: 1) the initiative of a local organization(s); 2) investment of local public or private resources; and 3) local control of the firm or activity (Green, et al., 1990).[21]

[21] Research on self-development efforts (Flora, et al., 1993, 1991; Green, et al. 1993, 1990) has found that these projects did not generate as many jobs as successful industrial recruitment efforts, although these jobs tended to be higher skilled than those associated with recruitment of absentee owned firms. The cost of self-development was low, as local governments were less likely to forego revenue for the effort.

Two moderate to high social infrastructure communities with some history of development activities (one industrial recruitment the other self-development) were selected. Tryton, the community with a recent history of industrial recruitment activities, and Solidale, a community with a history of recent self-development, had populations between 2,500 and 4,000 and were located in different states in the Midwest. A comparable community located in the Midwest[22] with a low level of social infrastructure and a limited history of community action could not be identified from the national data. After extensive phone interviewing of local and state informants about various communities that matched the population parameters, had a low level of social infrastructure and community action, and was also a county seat community (matching a characteristic of Solidale) was finally selected. The third community was Lussville, located in a third Midwestern state.

Each case study community is located in a different state, although all three states are contiguous. Two of the three communities are county seats and all three have populations between 2,500 and 4,000. Solidale was identified as having high social infrastructure and a recent history of self-development activities. Tryton was identified as having a moderate to high level of social infrastructure with a recent history of industrial recruitment. Lussville was identified as having low social infrastructure and a recent history of limited community or economic development projects. The next section contains further background and historical information about each of the three communities.

## Profile and History of Three Case Study Communities

Since their inception as farming towns around the Civil War period, each community has followed a different development path. In this section, the historic development and

[22] An unintended logistical need developing after scheduling the case study research in the other two communities. Also, the research team felt a Midwestern community would match the other two Midwestern communities already selected.

current conditions of Solidale, Lussville, and Tryton will be described as well as the counties in which they are located.

**Settlement—ethnic, racial, and religious diversity**

Each town was formally organized at about the same time. Solidale was founded in 1871 and became the county seat of Prosper County in 1876. Lussville was incorporated as a town in 1859 and had been designated the county seat a year earlier in 1858. Tryton was incorporated as a town in 1874 near the boundary of Brick County. Much of the surrounding regions where these towns are located had already been homesteaded. This period in the north central region of the U.S. was marked by the growth of small towns such as these to service the farming population (Garkovich, 1989).

Consistent with the migration and settlement patterns of the 1870 to 1890 period, a mix of German, English, Irish, and Swedish ancestry remains in all three communities from early settlement days. Tryton has a small African American population as a result of its slave state history. Today, German ancestry is the dominant ethnic origin in Solidale according to the 1990 census, with over 50 percent of the residents reporting some German ancestry. The town is racially homogenous (99 percent white). The single largest ancestry in Lussville is also German, with 47 percent reporting German ancestry in 1990. The town is also 99 percent white. The largest ancestry found in Tryton in 1990 was also German, although only 30 percent of the residents reported this ancestry. There is some racial diversity with about 88 percent of the population being white and 12 percent black. The high proportion of Germanic ancestry in all three communities is consistent with the historic settlement pattern of the Midwest. The area surrounding Tryton was settled somewhat earlier than the region surrounding the other two communities, which contributes to an increased mixture of English, Irish, and American ancestry. In addition, Tryton is the only community located in a state where slavery was legal, which accounts for the presence of an African American

Table 3.1: Ethnic ancestry and race by community (1990)

| | Solidale | Lussville | Tryton |
|---|---|---|---|
| % Population Reporting: | | --percent-- | |
| German Ancestry | 42.8 | 34.0 | 29.5 |
| English Ancestry | 14.9 | 13.9 | 11.8 |
| Swedish Ancestry | 10.7 | 5.1 | 0.5 |
| Irish Ancestry | 9.2 | 14.8 | 14.2 |
| Unites States or American | 0.5 | 2.4 | 17.7 |
| Race | | --percent-- | |
| Percent pop. White | 99.1 | 99.2 | 87.8 |
| Percent pop. Black | .1 | 0 | 11.8 |
| Percent pop. Other | .8 | .8 | .4 |

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, respective years

minority. Table 3.1 contains a breakdown of four largest ethnic ancestry's and race for each community.

None of the three communities is dominated by a single ethnic group. The incredible diversity of churches to be found in each of community corroborates this observation. Where there is a single, dominant ethnic group one might expect a dominant church, such as Catholic or Lutheran churches where only Germans settled. Historically there have been numerous churches in each of the communities and currently there are twelve different churches in Solidale, eleven in Lussville, and seventeen in Tryton. Some of these churches have small congregations, while others are quite large. For example in Lussville, the First Christian, Lutheran and Catholic churches all have membership in excess of 500, while the Congregational, Reorganized Church of Latter Day Saints, and Seventh Day Adventist Churches have less than 100 members each.

County-wide data, reveal that no religious affiliation claims over 50 percent of adherents in any of the counties where the case study sites are located (Bradley, et al., 1992). In Prosper County, where Solidale is located, United Methodist is the largest denomination with 37 percent of the church adherents, followed by Missouri Synod Lutheran (17 percent), Evangelical Lutheran (14 percent) and Catholic (10 percent). In Brick County, where Tryton

is located, 38 percent of the adherents are Southern Baptist. Catholic (13 percent), Church of Christ (11 percent), and Christian Church (10 percent) are the next three largest denominations. In Riverplain County, where Lussville is the county seat, the largest denominations are Catholic (20 percent), Evangelical Lutheran (19 percent), Missouri Synod Lutheran (17 percent), and United Methodist (15 percent).

**Population change 1890 through 1990**

The first clue that the three study sites have followed a different development trajectory is provided in Table 3.2, which contains population figures for the three towns and counties since 1890. Prosper County's population peaked in 1890 and had only 65 percent of its peak population in 1990. The majority of the population decline took place during the first half of the century with the sharpest decline occurring during the drought and depression decade of the 1930s. Since 1940, the population of Prosper County has fluctuated between 8,700 and 9,300. Solidale's population fluctuated around 2,500 through 1960, then began to increase during the 1960s and 1970s. During the farm crisis years of the 1980s, the

Table 3.2: Population of communities and counties 1890 to 1990

| Year | Solidale | Prosper County | Lussville | Riverplain County | Tryton | Brick County |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1890 | ------ | 14,096 | ------ | 14,515 | ------ | 22,074 |
| 1900 | ------ | 13,330 | ------ | 17,980 | ------ | 21,160 |
| 1910 | 2,630 | 13,459 | 2,026 | 16,633 | 1,595 | 21,687 |
| 1920 | 2,962 | 13,237 | 2,256 | 17,125 | 2,158 | 20,589 |
| 1930 | 2,715 | 12,159 | 2,538 | 18,213 | 2,450 | 22,077 |
| 1940 | 2,419 | 9,982 | 3,438 | 18,238 | 2,672 | 22,673 |
| 1950 | 2,455 | 8,778 | 3,498 | 16,303 | 2,624 | 23,829 |
| 1960 | 2,576 | 8,714 | 3,176 | 13,916 | 3,055 | 26,079 |
| 1970 | 3,138 | 8,867 | 3,283 | 12,069 | 3,033 | 25,362 |
| 1980 | 3,717 | 9,301 | 3,283 | 11,692 | 3,150 | 26,458 |
| 1990 | 3,810 | 8,862 | 2,936 | 10,034 | 2,683 | 23,599 |

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, respective years

population did not maintain the rate of growth of the previous two decades but did manage to grow 2.5 percent when similar communities in the region were losing population.

Population in Riverplain County grew 25 percent between 1890 and 1930 and has steadily declined since 1940. The population of Lussville peaked soon after the county's peak in 1950 with a slow, moderate decline since (16 percent over forty years). The pattern of dramatic population declines in Riverplain and Prosper Counties from 1930 to 1960 is characteristic of many rural counties as the Great Depression, drought, and mechanization altered the economic opportunities of agriculture (Garkovich, 1989).

Greater economic diversification enabled Brick County to avoid the substantial population losses of the 1930 through 1960 period. Brick County's population has fluctuated between 20,000 and 27,000 over the last 100 years. The county's population peaked in 1980 and declined nearly 11 percent by 1990. Tryton's population has steadily grown since 1910 with a substantial jump during the 1950s (16 percent) and a peak population of 3,150 in 1980. During the 1980s, the population of Tryton declined 15 percent.

**Industrial composition: 1970 through 1990**

The 1970, the populations of Solidale, Lussville, and Tryton were all between 3,000 and 3,300. By 1990, however, the local populations ranged between 2,600 and 3,800. To understand the population developments described above, a closer examination of the industrial make-up of the communities and counties is helpful.

While agriculture was the central industry when the three communities were founded, Tryton's economy quickly diversified when several refractories were sited in or near the community to process locally mined clay into firebricks for industrial and commercial use. In the 1920s, according to the Tryton Centennial History, Tryton community leaders organized to attract a garment manufacturer to provide employment opportunities for women if they

wished to work. Thus Tryton's economy has historically been supported by a number of industries—agriculture, industrial manufacturing, and textiles.

Solidale and Lussville remained almost entirely agriculture dependent through the 1950s. Lussville, located on the floodplain of the Missouri river, was surrounded by potentially productive land that was swampy and prone to flooding until drainage districts were established early in the century. Over fifty named ditches were constructed by mid-century. Solidale's agricultural base was solidified after the drought and depression of the 1930s with the introduction of deepwell irrigation. In 1955, Prosper County celebrated the drilling of the 500$^{th}$ well prompting the local newspaper to dub the county as the "Deepwell Irrigation Center of the Nation." Beginning in the mid-50s to mid-60s, Solidale organized to attract additional industry to complement its agricultural base.

In the mid-1950s, a group of Solidale citizens organized an industrial development corporation in an attempt to work to bring new industries to the community. The industrial group was later reorganized in 1963 as a non-profit development corporation and a stock offering at the time raised nearly $23,000 from local citizens and businesses. An 86-acre industrial site was purchased and a number of successful business ventures located at the site over the next ten years. In 1965, a manufacturer of hospital equipment located in the park; a manufactured housing plant began operation in 1971; and an electronics firm was attracted to the site in 1973.

The impact of Solidale's efforts to diversify are reflected in employment by industry census data. In 1960, only 63 people were employed in manufacturing. The number grew to 121 in 1970, 332 in 1980, and remained constant in 1990 with 320 persons employed in the manufacturing industry. In 1990, 138 persons were employed in the manufacturing of durable goods and 182 were employed in nondurable goods manufacturing. The largest manufacturing employers located in the community in 1997 are the manufactured homes

plant with 277 employees, a pet food processing plant employing 128, and a hospital equipment manufacturer with 70 employees.

Since all but fifteen acres of the local development corporation's first industrial site had been occupied, a second industrial site was purchased and developed. In 1995, an ethanol plant (which adds value to local corn production) began operation at the new site and currently employees 40 persons. Diversification of the local economy continues in the 1990s. The independent, locally owned telephone company has aggressively pursued new opportunities in the area of communication services. The company has had a history of innovation, including moving quickly to develop cable services in the 1970s, development of fiber optics and promotion of tele-commuting in the 1980s and 1990s, and recent acquisition of the state contract to provide a relay service for deaf customers as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The telecommunications company employs 255 and an associated telemarketing firm employs another 100.

Table 3.3 presents changes in local employment by industry from 1970 to 1990 in each of the three communities and the respective counties. Between 1970 and 1990, the percent of employed persons in Solidale working in manufacturing rose from 10.5 to 18.3 percent of the total labor force, a substantial increase attributable to the successful addition of several new industries to the community. At the same time, there was a significant drop in the proportion of persons employed in manufacturing in Tryton, declining from 54.1 percent to 35.6 percent. In raw numbers, this decline was from 660 in 1970 to 357 in 1990, a decline of 303 persons. While Tryton was fortunate to be located near significant deposits of clay necessary for supporting several large refractories and fortunate to develop textile manufacturing, the agricultural recession of the 1980s coupled with a decline in domestic textile and industrial production severely impacted the local economy. Agricultural employment in the county declined from 1,223 in 1980 to 809 in 1990, a 34 percent decline. The largest refractory employed 610 workers in 1980 but only 175 by 1993. Two other

refractories with 135 employees closed between 1983 and 1993. The largest textile manufacturer located in Tryton was sold and its employment dropped from 325 in 1980 to 99 by 1993. Another textile employer of 115 workers went out of business during this period.

Table 3.3: Population employed by industry, 1970 to 1990; County and Community

| | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | Change 1970-90 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ag., forestry & fisheries (%) | | | | |
| Solidale | 6.5 | 3.3 | 4.6 | -1.9 |
| Lussville | 14.0 | 12.1 | 3.3 | -10.7 |
| Tryton | 6.0 | 3.1 | 2.2 | -3.8 |
| Manufacturing (%) | | | | |
| Solidale | 10.5 | 20.3 | 18.3 | +7.8 |
| Lussville | 5.9 | 5.2 | 8.7 | +2.8 |
| Tryton | 54.1 | 48.8 | 35.6 | -18.5 |
| # of Employed persons 16+ | | | | |
| Solidale | 1,149 | 1,633 | 1,749 | +52.2 |
| Lussville | 1,247 | 1,272 | 1,199 | -3.8 |
| Tryton | 1,221 | 1,405 | 1,002 | -17.9 |
| **County Data** | | | | |
| Ag., forestry & fisheries (%) | | | | |
| Prosper County | 32.2 | 22.2 | 17.3 | -14.9 |
| Riverplain County | 28.8 | 29.0 | 18.5 | -10.3 |
| Brick County | 10.8 | 10.8 | 7.8 | -3.0 |
| Manufacturing (%) | | | | |
| Prosper County | 9.2 | 14.7 | 15.5 | +6.3 |
| Riverplain County | 6.1 | 6.7 | 8.6 | +2.5 |
| Brick County | 33.5 | 31.9 | 23.0 | -10.5 |
| # of Employed persons 16+ | | | | |
| Prosper County | 3,152 | 4,075 | 4,267 | +35.3 |
| Riverplain County | 4,251 | 4,567 | 4,193 | -1.4 |
| Brick County | 9,939 | 11,308 | 10,332 | +4.0 |

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, respective years

Changes in Lussville during the 1970 to 1990 period were of a different sort. Since little economic diversification had occurred, changes in the farm economy have been especially significant. In 1970, 1,225 of the 4,251 employed persons in the county worked in agriculture. This was about 29 percent of the county's working population. In 1980, the proportion remained the same. In 1990, the county's population employed in agriculture was 774, a decline of 42 percent from 1980 levels. A similar, dramatic drop in the agricultural employment is also found in the town of Lussville, with a decline from 14 percent to just over 3 percent employed in agriculture. Industrial employment opportunities in Lussville are largely confined to a farm wagon company with about 70 employees. The other leading employers in the town are the local hospital, nursing home, and the retail sector.

Examining the employment composition of the three communities in relation to their 1970 and 1990 populations is revealing. For Solidale, despite a 27 percent decline in countywide employment in agriculture,[23] efforts to diversify the economy with new industry has provided employment opportunities contributing to a 21 percent increase in the town's population since 1970. In Tryton, early economic diversification contributed to its steady growth from 1910 to 1960; but when agriculture, textiles and industrial manufacturing struggled through the 1980s, the 15 percent decline in local population was not surprising. In Lussville, where agriculture dominates, the farm recession of the 1980s took its toll and the local population declined by nearly 12 percent.

**Income and Poverty**

The impact of changes in the local economy is reflected in the income and poverty data for each community (Table 3.4). In 1970, per capita income (in 1990 dollars) in

[23] Data from the Census of Agriculture (U.S. Department of Commerce, respective years) reveals that the numbers of farms declined from 25 to 30 percent in the three counties between 1974 and 1992. In Brick County, the number of farms fell 25 percent, from 1,379 farms in 1974 to 1,035 in 1992. In Riverplain County, the number fell 30 percent, from 1,183 farms to 822. In Brick County, the number fell 28 percent, from 925 to 664 farms.

Solidale, Tryton, and Lussville was about the same, although the poverty rates in Tryton (18.1 percent) and Lussville (16.8 percent) were higher than Solidale's rate (14.3 percent) in 1970. Income was higher in Solidale in 1990 than in 1970, while it remained unchanged in Lussville and Tryton. Solidale experienced significant growth in family income from 1970 to 1980 (increase of 16.7 percent) with a slight decrease during the 1980s (5 percent). Lussville's income remained the same during the 1970s but fell 2.5 percent during the 1980s. Tryton's median family income rose seven percent during the 1970s but fell 7 percent in the 1980s. In 1990, all three communities had median family incomes lower than the regional[24] and national averages—Solidale's median family income was 91 percent of the regional average and the median in Lussville and Tryton was slightly less than 75 percent of the regional average.

Table 3.4: Community and county poverty rates and incomes, 1970 to 1990

| | Solidale | Lussville | Tryton | Prosper County | River-plain County | Brick County | National Average | Regional Average[a] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Median Family Income (1990$) | | | | | | | | |
| 1970 | 26,825 | 24,815 | 24,641 | 25,100 | 23,054 | 26,247 | 31,684 | 29,688 |
| 1980 | 31,307 | 24,897 | 26,390 | 28,579 | 24,418 | 28,304 | 30,996 | 30,486 |
| 1990 | 29,773 | 24,272 | 24,388 | 28,886 | 24,887 | 27,791 | 35,225 | 32,734 |
| Per Capita ($) | | | | | | | | |
| 1970 | 8,639 | 8,789 | 8,597 | 7,906 | 8,604 | 8,766 | 10,309 | 9,592 |
| 1980 | 9,916 | 9,635 | 11,039 | 10,159 | 9,594 | 10,152 | 11,358 | 11,009 |
| 1990 | 11,140 | 10,826 | 9,050 | 11,103 | 10,584 | 11,310 | 14,420 | 13,745 |
| Poverty (%) | | | | | | | | |
| 1970 | 14.3 | 16.8 | 18.1 | 14.3 | 14.7 | 16.1 | | |
| 1980 | 9.0 | 12.5 | 9.9 | 10.5 | 15.3 | 11.5 | 12.4 | 11.0 |
| 1990 | 10.1 | 15.3 | 19.4 | 8.8 | 14.8 | 14.9 | 13.1 | 12.0 |

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, respective years

[a] The comparison region includes the western states of the North Central Region. The states include Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas in 1980 and 1990. In 1970, the comparison region is Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska and Kansas.

[24] The comparison region includes the western states of the North Central Region. The states include Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas in 1980 and 1990. In 1970, the comparison region is Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska and Kansas.

The dramatic economic changes in Tryton during the 1980s are reflected in a sharp decline in per capita income (18 percent decline) and a doubling of the poverty rate from 1980 to 1990. By 1990, Tryton's 19.4 percent poverty rate had almost doubled the 1980 rate of 9.9 percent. Poverty in Tryton was also substantially higher than the regional average in 1990 (61 percent higher). Poverty was high in Lussville compared to the state and national average, but the jump from 1980 was not as pronounced as the jump in Tryton.

**Age and Education**

Two important population characteristics related to local employment, income, and population changes are age and education. The historic pattern of rural to urban migration during the last 100 years has contributed to rural places having an older age structure and relatively less educated population than do metropolitan areas (Garkovich, 1989). Young people have been the most common migrants from rural to urban places as the median ages from 1970 to 1990 for all three communities reflect this trend (see Table 3.5). There were slight declines in Solidale's and Tryton's median age from 1970 to 1980, perhaps due to the job opportunities in both communities' industrial sectors. The median age in Lussville is over 10 years greater than the regional and national averages in 1990, reflecting the pattern of young adults' out-migration. Solidale and Tryton are substantially above the national and regional averages as well. The high median age is also reflected in the high proportion of residents 65 and older in all three communities. About a quarter of residents are over 65 in each community, while the regional and national averages are half this proportion. This pattern contributes to Riverplain being a natural decrease county where there have been more deaths than births in eleven of the last thirteen years (Goudy, et al., 1997). There are a number of implications of this older age structure, such as the attractiveness of the communities to businesses and working age residents (Garkovich, 1989).

Table 3.5: Median age and population over 65

| | Solidale | Lussville | Tryton | Prosper County | River-plain County | Brick County | National Average | Regional Average[a] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Median Age | | | | | | | | |
| 1970 | 36.9 | 38.5 | 36.9 | 31.0 | 36.9 | 32.1 | 28.3 | 26.9 |
| 1980 | 35.0 | 39.2 | 36.1 | 31.8 | 37.2 | 32.2 | 30.0 | 29.9 |
| 1990 | 38.4 | 43.5 | 40.4 | 35.2 | 41.3 | 37.1 | 32.9 | 33.1 |
| % Pop. 65+ | | | | | | | | |
| 1970 | 22.1 | 20.2 | 17.3 | 14.0 | 16.9 | 13.5 | 9.9 | 10.8 |
| 1980 | 21.6 | 24.2 | 19.4 | 14.0 | 20.1 | 19.4 | 11.3 | 12.8 |
| 1990 | 23.1 | 26.9 | 25.5 | 16.1 | 23.7 | 19.5 | 12.6 | 13.9 |

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, respective years

[a] The comparison region includes the western states of the North Central Region. The states include Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas in 1980 and 1990. In 1970, the comparison region is Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska and Kansas.

Also influenced by the movement of rural people to urban places are the levels of educational attainment found in rural places. In Tryton educational attainment significantly lags the national and regional averages (Table 3.6). Factors other than migration contributing to this condition include the historical presence of factory employment where high educational attainment is traditionally not a job requisite. In 1990, Tryton had one-third the regional average of college graduates (6.9 percent compared to 19.2 percent). Solidale and Lussville also lag the regional and national average, but not by the same magnitude. Percent of high school graduates in Solidale and Lussville lag slightly below the regional average.

Table 3.6: Education in communities and national and regional averages

| | Solidale | Lussville | Tryton | National Average | Regional Average[a] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Education—1990 | | | | | |
| % H.S. Graduate[b] | 76.4 | 69.4 | 54.8 | 75.2 | 78.9 |
| % B.A. or greater | 14.8 | 13.7 | 6.9 | 20.3 | 19.2 |

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, respective years

[a] The comparison region includes the western states of the North Central Region. The states include Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas in 1980 and 1990. In 1970, the comparison region is Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska and Kansas.

[b]Percent high school graduate includes all persons 25+ with high school degree.

Lower educational attainment, particularly fewer college graduates, can have implications for development, particularly development requiring high levels of human capital.

**Local institutions and ecology**

In addition to the industrial and population composition of the three communities, a review of some of the basic community institutions and each community's location in the region helps to round out the community profiles. All three communities are governed by a mayor and council. Tryton and Solidale both have a city administrator (Lussville is exploring the possibility of hiring a city administrator). There is a local chamber in each community with Solidale's being the only one with a full time staff person. As mentioned earlier, Solidale has an active non-profit development group that has initiated numerous economic and community development projects over the years. Lussville has attempted but been unable to sustain a development organization. Tryton has a quasi-governmental industrial development authority that has revenue raising and spending powers as an extension of local government.

Each of the three communities is the site of a high school and middle school, which service the community and surrounding countryside. Solidale and Lussville, as county seat towns, have developed as county hubs and have a slightly larger array of institutions; both have a local community hospital and county fairgrounds. Tryton has recently developed its own local fairgrounds. Solidale and Lussville also have a community library, while Tryton has a branch library of the Brick county seat library. Solidale and Lussville also have local history museums, which are maintained by the local county historical groups.

None of the three communities is geographically remote. Solidale and Lussville are both connected to the products and services of metropolitan areas by an interstate highway. Solidale is located 2.5 miles away from an east-west interstate and slightly over 70 miles from the nearest metropolitan area. Lussville is located two miles from a north-south

interstate and is about 60 miles from the nearest metropolitan area. Tryton is at the intersection of a U.S. highway and a state highway and is located less than 20 miles from different county seat towns (one of which has a population greater than 10,000) and 100 miles from the nearest metropolitan area.

## Summary Community Profiles

### Solidale

Selected as a community with a history of self development and moderate to high social infrastructure, Solidale is the largest of the three with a population of 3,810. Originally settled as a farming community, there has been substantial diversification of the local economy since 1960 with a number of manufacturing firms being sited in the community and expansion of a local telecommunications firm. The community experienced rapid growth during the 1970 to 1980 period as a result of this diversification. Poverty and the median family income are slightly under the average of the west North Central Region. Unemployment was very low in 1990 (2.2 percent). Solidale is an older community, with a median age of 38.4 in 1990, above the national average of 32.9. Solidale has the highest level of educational attainment of the three communities, with 76.4 percent of the resident 25 and older having a high school degree and nearly 15 percent holding a bachelor's degree. The community has an active Chamber of Commerce and nonprofit development corporation. The community is located near an interstate highway and is less than two hours from a metropolitan area.

### Lussville

Lussville was selected because it was identified as having little recent economic or community development and low social infrastructure. The 1990 population was 2,936, down 10.5 percent from 1980. Originally established as the county seat of an agricultural

county, farming has remained the leading industry. The farm crisis of the 1980s and agricultural consolidation of the rich floodplain farmland around the community has restricted local employment opportunities. Poverty and unemployment in 1990 are greater than the regional average, while median family income is 70 percent of the national average. Lussville is the oldest community with a median age of 43.5, 10 years above the regional and national average. Educational attainment is moderately lower than the regional average. Lussville has a Chamber of Commerce but has not successfully maintained a development organization. The community has a library, hospital and school. All built before 1970. The community is located near an interstate highway and is less than two hours from two different metropolitan areas.

**Tryton**

The smallest of the three communities (pop. 2,683), Tryton was selected because there was evidence it had recently been trying to recruit industry and also had a moderate to high level of social infrastructure according to a key informant survey. Tryton's population declined substantially during the 1980s (15 percent) as farming suffered and the two leading manufacturing industries (textiles and firebricks) also were adversely impacted by globalization and economic restructuring. Manufacturing employment in the community fell from over 50 percent of employed persons in 1970 to 36 percent in 1990. Unemployment in 1990 was about average for the region, although poverty was quite high (19.4 percent of persons) and median family income was 75 percent of the regional average. Tryton is the only one of the three communities with any racial diversity (12 percent black). Like the other two communities, Tryton's median age was high (40.4 years). Educational attainment was the lowest in Tryton, with only 55 percent of person 25 and older being high school graduates and only 7 percent having a bachelor's degree. Tryton has a chamber of commerce and an industrial development organization affiliated with local government. Tryton is not a county

seat and lacks some of the institutions of the other two communities—such as a hospital and main library. There is a local school located in the community. Tryton is located on a single lane state highway and is over 100 miles from the nearest metropolitan area.

## Data Collection in Case Study Communities

Data to test the hypotheses were collected from a variety of sources. An initial key informant survey of a local elected leader and supplementary key informant interviews with other local community leaders and state-level development professionals provided some basic background information used to select the communities for further study. Secondary data from the census and other governmental sources assisted in the development of community profiles. Field research was conducted by a team of two or three researchers who spent approximately ten days (an initial visit of about a week and a follow-up visit of about three days) in each community interviewing local organizational and institutional leaders and reviewing local government, development and historical documents. Newspapers of the last five years were also reviewed during the field research. Between 30 and 35 residents were formally interviewed in each community. Some less intensive interviews were also conducted to illuminate specific points about the community. The semi-structured interviews focused on aspects of social infrastructure and community action, and all respondents were asked to identify reputational leaders and important community development projects. Information about each respondent's personal and professional networks, and the respondents general assessment of the community was also collected.

During and following the field research, a roster of community organizations and institutions was created. From a variety of sources, including published organizational materials, newspaper reports, and direct contact of organizational officers, current leadership rosters for the organizations and institutions were acquired. Leaders were defined as elected officers and board members. In the case of corporate organizations such as banks, leadership

was defined as board members and bank officers. This information was used to analyze the structure of interlocking directorates and identify central organizations and interorganizational leaders.

After the initial visit, three projects in each community were selected for more detailed examination. Recent projects (occurring in the last five years) were identified during the key informant interviews. Three different types of community projects were profiled: an economic development project; a community development project (not primarily intended to create jobs but to improve local use-values); and a community festival or fair. When more than one project was identified in any one area, the most recent project was chosen. One or more key informants were contacted for each project to provide further detail and identify from a roster of local organizations, local and extra-local institutions, and businesses the type of resources (support, money, or information) that had been provided. This information coupled with a narrative of the project's evolution and outcomes provided examples of community action.

Finally, a community survey of local residents was conducted following the initial visit. A sample of every fourth residential household listed in the local telephone book was selected for the survey. The local telephone exchange included the community and some of the surrounding countryside. Survey data collection followed a modified total design method with the mailing of an initial survey, a reminder postcard and a replacement survey. The cover letter indicated the preferred (randomly chosen) adult household respondent's sex, unless it was a single householder in which case sex was not an issue. To insure that rural respondents in the sample identified with the study community, all respondents were asked to identify the community they called "home." Individuals who did not identify the study community as his/her "home" town were omitted from further analysis.

# CHAPTER 4. ANALYSIS OF RESIDENT SURVEY

The analysis of data from the three community studies is divided into three chapters and contains two distinct analytical procedures. In Chapter 4, the resident survey is analyzed. In Chapter 5, interorganizational networks, personal consultation networks, and reputational power data are analyzed and characterized in each of the three study communities. In Chapter 6, several recent community projects in each community are profiled to illuminate the findings of Chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 6 concludes with a summary of findings in the three chapters.

The analysis of the resident survey begins with a description of the sample from each community. This is followed by a review of the hypothesized relationships and a discussion of how the measures are operationalized. Contrasts of the measures by community illuminate significant differences among the communities and multivariate analysis reveals several significant associations related to the proposed hypotheses. The section concludes with a discussion of the results and hypotheses.

## Description of Community Samples

A sample of every fourth residential household from the local telephone exchange resulted in nearly identical sample sizes in each community. Table 4.1 contains detailed information about sample size and response rates. The response rates in Solidale and Lussville are both high, above 65 percent. The response rate in Tryton was lower, 58.5 percent. The lower response rate and the higher number of undeliverables may in part be a function of using a 10 month old telephone directory to draw the Tryton sample compared to those used for Solidale and Lussville (both less than three months old).

Comparison of the sample respondents with population characteristics is somewhat problematic since census data is not compiled for telephone exchange regions. However,

Table 4.1: Sample and response data

| | Solidale | Tryton | Lussville |
|---|---|---|---|
| Initial sample (every 4th household) | 470 | 479 | 481 |
| Undeliverable surveys | 19 | 31 | 17 |
| Actual sample | 451 | 448 | 464 |
| Completed & returned surveys | 296 | 262 | 302 |
| Response rate | 65.6 | 58.5 | 65.1 |
| Respondents not identifying with town | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Final sample | 292 | 258 | 298 |

recent software advances allow for aggregation of census block characteristics within a specified provide a rough approximation of telephone exchange regions (CensusCD from GeoLytics, Inc. (1997) was used for this analysis). Creating a geographic centroid for each community and aggregating population characteristics within a ten mile radius of the centroid reveals that the countryside surrounding Tryton is the most populated while the countryside around Lussville is the least populated (see Table 4.2). The sample drawn from the telephone exchange results in a higher proportion of respondents outside the city of Tryton than outside the city of Lussville, consistent with the census aggregation. Over 28 percent of the respondents who lived outside the city limits claimed Tryton as their "home;" only 13 percent of the respondents in Lussville lived outside the city limits of their "home" community. Nearly 16 percent of Solidale respondents lived outside the city limits.

Table 4.2: Location of respondents and local populations

| | Solidale N=292 | Tryton N=258 | Lussville N=298 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Where do you live? (%) | | | |
| Within city limits | 84.1 | 71.8 | 86.9 |
| Outside city limits, on a farm | 12.8 | 20.0 | 6.4 |
| Outside city limits, not on a farm | 3.1 | 8.2 | 6.7 |
| Population of City | 3,810 | 2,683 | 2,936 |
| Population of City + 10 mile radius from city centroid | 7,320 | 7,458 | 6,544 |

Sample characteristics are generally consistent with the expected characteristics of the local adult population (see Table 4.3). More women responded than men, a common characteristic of adult, rural populations. The mean age of respondents was highest in Tryton and Lussville and lowest in Solidale, a pattern consistent with the population mean. Household size was nearly identical to the household size reported in the 1990 census. The number of African American respondents was slightly lower than the general population reported in the 1990 Census (4.9 percent versus 11.8 percent). The smaller number of sample respondents may partially be attributable to the young age structure of the local black

Table 4.3: Background characteristics of survey respondents

| | Solidale N=292 | Tryton N=258 | Lussville N=298 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender (1=female; 0=male) (%) | | | |
| Male | 43.3 | 44.5 | 41.7 |
| Female | 56.7 | 55.5 | 58.3 |
| Age (years) | 55 | 57 | 57 |
| Marital Status (%) | | | |
| Married | 74.0 | 67.2 | 60.1 |
| Divorced/Separated | 9.0 | 9.3 | 8.8 |
| Never Married | 6.6 | 3.6 | 10.8 |
| Widowed | 10.4 | 19.8 | 20.3 |
| Members in household (persons) | 2.5 | 2.3 | 2.2 |
| Members in household under 18 | .6 | .5 | .5 |
| Race (%) | | | |
| African American | 1.0 | 4.9 | .7 |
| Hispanic/Latino | .3 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Native American | .3 | 1.2 | 0.0 |
| White | 97.9 | 93.9 | 99.3 |
| Other | .3 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Lived in Community (years) | 29 | 37 | 33 |
| Lived Elsewhere in lifetime (%) | 88.2 | 77.3 | 83.4 |
| Own or Rent (%) | | | |
| Own | 78 | 90 | 82 |
| Rent | 18 | 7 | 15 |
| Other | 4 | 3 | 3 |

population, which has a higher proportion of its population under 18 years of age. Whatever the reason, there may be an under-representation of African-Americans in the sample.

Respondents from Tryton were the most stable with the smallest proportion of respondents reporting having lived elsewhere (22.7 percent). Average length of residence in the community was also substantially higher among Tryton respondents (37 years compared to 33 years in Lussville and 29 years in Solidale). The stable population likely contributes to higher home ownership in Tryton (90 percent). In Solidale, 18 percent of respondent reported renting and 15 percent of the Lussville respondents reported renting.

Consistent with census data, the highest level of educational attainment is found in Solidale, where over 26 percent of the respondents reported attaining a bachelor's degree or higher (see Table 4.4). In Lussville, 19 percent of respondents reported this level of educational attainment and only 10 percent attained this level in Tryton. Although patterned similar to the 1990 Census figures, educational attainment of sampled respondents is moderately higher in all three communities.

The gross household income reported by respondents was similar to the 1990 Census figures. Lussville and Tryton respondents reported lower gross household income than Solidale residents. Nearly 32 percent of Lussville respondents and 27 percent of Tryton respondents reported household income below $20,000 versus only 21.2 percent of Solidale respondents. At the upper end, more Solidale respondents reported household income greater than $50,000 (28.2 percent) than did Tryton (19.5 percent) and Lussville (20.8 percent) respondents. This pattern is consistent with the median income figures from the Census reported earlier in Table 3.4.

A significant proportion of respondents from all three communities were retirees, with over 40 percent of Lussville respondents reporting they were retired. The number of unemployed respondents was low in all three communities. Most employed persons reported full-time employment. The employed persons appear relatively satisfied with their

Table 4.4: Education, income, and occupation of survey respondents

| | Solidale N=292 | Tryton N=258 | Lussville N=298 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | % | % | % |
| Highest level of formal education (%) | | | |
| Less than high school graduate | 7.3 | 19.7 | 14.9 |
| High School graduate | 28.4 | 49.6 | 38.0 |
| Some college | 37.7 | 20.9 | 28.1 |
| Bachelors degree | 15.9 | 4.9 | 12.2 |
| Grad/Professional degree | 10.7 | 4.9 | 6.8 |
| Approximate gross household income (%) | | | |
| $19,999 or less | 21.2 | 26.4 | 30.9 |
| $20,000 to 49,999 | 50.5 | 54.2 | 48.3 |
| $50,000 to $74,999 | 19.9 | 12.0 | 12.6 |
| $75,000 or more | 9.3 | 7.5 | 8.2 |
| Present employment status (%) | | | |
| Employed/self employed full time | 47.2 | 51.0 | 43.4 |
| Employed/self employed half time | 11.0 | 5.4 | 8.3 |
| Retired | 30.9 | 36.9 | 40.0 |
| Full-time homemaker | 8.2 | 2.9 | 6.2 |
| Student | .4 | .4 | .3 |
| Unemployed | 2.5 | 3.3 | 1.7 |
| Travel distance to work (miles) | 8.3 | 11.4 | 9.8 |
| Occupation (% of employed persons) | | | |
| Professional and Managers | 38.5 | 30.6 | 37.3 |
| Sales & Clerical | 23.5 | 20.1 | 22.5 |
| Craftsmen, operatives, transport or laborer | 19.7 | 29.2 | 19.7 |
| Farmers | 9.2 | 11.2 | 4.2 |
| Service & Household Workers | 7.9 | 7.6 | 14.8 |
| Employment Satisfaction (% of emp. persons) | | | |
| Very satisfied | 61 | 54 | 61 |
| Somewhat satisfied | 36 | 39 | 31 |
| Somewhat dissatisfied | 3 | 5 | 5 |
| Very dissatisfied | 0 | 2 | 3 |

employment in all three communities (over 90 percent of employed persons in all three communities reported being very or somewhat satisfied with his/her employment). A wide variety of occupations was reported by respondents; professional and managerial occupations were more common in Lussville (37.3 percent) and Solidale (38.5 percent) than in Tryton

(30.6 percent). More manufacturing and laboring jobs existed in Tryton (29.2 percent) than in both Lussville or Solidale (19.7 percent in both). Due to the sample encompassing more than the city's legal boundary, a higher proportion of individuals reported farming occupations than found in the 1990 census. For example, only 1.4 percent of the employed persons in Tryton reported working in agriculture in the 1990 Census while 11.2 percent of survey respondents reported working in agriculture.

To summarize, the characteristics of survey respondents in the three communities were patterned similarly to the 1990 Census figures. Solidale respondents have the highest education and income, while Tryton respondents have the lowest educational attainment, highest stability and the highest proportion living outside the community boundary. Lussville reports the highest number of retirees and moderate levels of educational attainment. Lussville's income levels are lower than Solidale's but comparable to Tryton. Generally, the characteristics of respondents do not deviate substantially from what one would expect and should prove useful for testing the dissertation hypotheses.

## Model Illustrating the Hypothesized Relationships

In chapter 2, two hypotheses were proposed:

*Hypothesis #1*: The greater the embeddedness of local interaction in the geographic community and the greater the gemeinschaft-like bond that emerges from this interaction, the more likely community action will occur. In other words, the more social capital in the community, the more likely there is community action.

*Hypothesis #2*: The more diverse, inclusive, and tolerant are the organizational and individual patterns of association within social fields and the community field, the greater is the capacity for community action. In other words, a community with better developed social infrastructure will have increased capacity to act due to greater access to resources, ideas, and people.

Figure 4.1 contains a model summarizing the hypothesized relationships. Interaction embedded in the local society and an affective, gemeinschaft-like bond among local residents are two forms of social capital which are hypothesized to positively impact community action. Further, the capacity to act can be conditioned by social infrastructure such as the structure of interorganizational relations and the existence of a community field. Although not possible to assess with the data reported in this dissertation, the interactional perspective anticipates that the process of acting enhance social capital as well as social infrastructure.

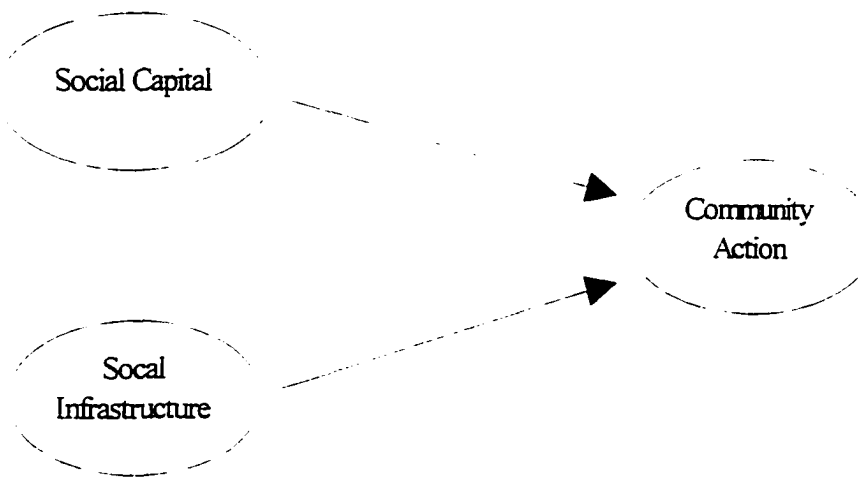


Figure 4.1: Model of hypothesized relationships

The hypotheses do not propose any direct causal relationships between social capital and social infrastructure, although the two concepts likely have a complex and potentially self-reinforcing relationship. The relationship between social capital and social infrastructure is not believed to be linear as relatively spontaneous or unorganized community action could result from high social capital even where there is limited organizational social infrastructure. When social capital leads to planned community action, though, organizational capacity may

be developed and social infrastructure built.[25] Conversely, where interaction patterns are sparse and lack a gemeinschaft character, strategic use of local organizational capacity for community action may increase local interaction and the emergence of a solidary bond. A pattern of high social infrastructure and low social capital seems highly unlikely, due to action being viewed by the interactional perspective as an expression of the solidary bond ( a social capital like characteristic). The analysis will not directly examine the relationship between social infrastructure and social capital.

To test the two hypotheses, several independent measures approximating resident interaction embedded in the local society, the density of residents' local social networks, the perception of a gemeinschaft-like affective bond, and measures of the inclusiveness of local organizations are proposed and related to two measures of local action. Multivariate analysis will be used to determine if the independent measures of social capital and social infrastructure influence local community action.

## Description of the Measures

### Independent Measures

Granovetter (1985) does not explain how to best measure embeddedness, but the work of Wellman (1979; 1996) and Hunter (1975) suggest a certain possibilities. Three measures are proposed to assess the level of resident embeddedness in the local society (See Table 4.5). First, a battery of questions concerning where respondents receive a variety of services (either mostly inside community or mostly outside the community) are combined in a count scale to create a local service consumption scale. The four items include: primary health care; shopping for daily needs; recreation/entertainment; and attending church. The

[25] Poplin (1979:203-210) discusses three types of community action: spontaneous community action, routinized community action, and initiated community action. The supposition being made above is that routinized community action and initiated community action are the impetus for the development of social infrastructure and community fields.

measure is proposed to determine the level of consumptive behavior embedded in the community. Residents of Lussville reported the most services received locally (average of 2.8 of 5 services), followed by Solidale (2.6) and Tryton (2.2). Contributing to Tryton residents' lower local consumption is the substantially lower proportion of Tryton residents receiving their primary health care locally[26]. The only other substantial consumptive difference was the greater proportion of Lussville respondents utilizing local recreation/entertainment services than residents of either Solidale or Tryton (although a majority of residents in all communities reported acquiring recreation/entertainment services mostly outside the community).

The two other measures of local embeddedness are working locally and socializing locally. Respondents were asked where they worked; those working within two miles of the community were designated as working locally.[27] Residents of Tryton were the most likely to work outside the community (14 percent of the respondents) while residents of Solidale were least likely to work outside the community (only nine percent). Respondents also were

Table 4.5: Contrast of local embeddedness items across three communities[a]

| | Solidale N=292 | Tryton N=258 | Lussville N=298 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Local embeddedness** | | | |
| Services received locally (4 item count) | $2.6^{T}$ | 2.2 | $2.8^{T}$ |
| Local primary health care | $85^{T}$ | 49 | $83^{T}$ |
| Local shopping | $86^{T}$ | 77 | $85^{T}$ |
| Local recreation/entertainment | 16 | 16 | $31^{ST}$ |
| Local church | 78 | 78 | 82 |
| Work Locally(%) | | | |
| Work/retired in the community | 91 | 86 | 88 |
| Local Socializing | | | |
| Do you recreate or socialize with group from comm. (5 cat.) | $3.2^{TL}$ | 3.0 | 2.9 |

[a]The superscript letter corresponds to community residents responding significantly more affirmative than the community identified by the superscript— $^{S}$ denotes Solidale; $^{T}$ denotes Tryton; and $^{L}$ denotes Lussville.

[26] Tryton is the only one of the three communities without a local hospital, which is related to its non-county seat status.

[27] Retirees were coded as working locally since the interaction of this group was expected to be comparable to working locally.

asked: "Do you regularly participate in recreational or social activities with a group of [community residents]". Five response categories: very often, fairly often, sometimes, almost never, never (coded 1=never to 5=very often). Residents of Solidale reported a slightly higher frequency of local socializing than residents of Tryton or Lussville.

Local social networks also reflect interaction embedded in the community. A measure of local friendship networks was constructed based on the findings of earlier research (Ryan, Terry and Besser, 1995).[28] Factor analysis of the three friendship items and three items related to a gemeinschaft-like bond were factor analyzed to confirm the factors identified by Ryan et al. (1995). Similar to the earlier research, the factors were allowed to correlate (maximum likelihood extraction with oblimin rotation) and the two expected factors were identified (Table 4.6). Factor-based scales were constructed by summing responses to the three items loading strongest on the respective factor.

The factor-based scale approximating the level of respondents' local friendship networks consisted of three items pertaining to the existence of a friendship network or respondent perception that friends were available in the community (see Table 4.7). The three items include, "About what proportion of all your close personal adult friends live in [community name]? (response categories were "none or very few of them," "less than half of

Table 4.6: Factor analysis[a] of social capital indicators

| | Factor 1 | Factor 2 |
|---|---|---|
| Proportion of close friends living in community (5 category) | -.06 | .52 |
| Usually can find someone to talk to (SD/SA) | .10 | .70 |
| Being a resident like living with close friends (SD/SA) | .36 | .51 |
| Unfriendly/Friendly (7 pt. semantic differential) | .78 | .11 |
| Indifferent/Supportive (7 pt. Semantic differential) | .73 | .00 |
| Trusting/Not Trusting (7 pt. Semantic differential) | .64 | -.05 |

[a]maximum likelihood with an oblimin rotation

[28] One item from this earlier research, proportion of residents known by name, was not included because the question is problematic to compare across different sized communities. Its inclusion in exploratory analysis also resulted in the communality of some items exceeding acceptable levels. In its place a likert-like question was substituted: "Being a resident of [community name] is like living with a group of close friends."

them," "about half of them," "most of them," or "all of them); "If I feel like just talking, I usually can find someone in [community name] to talk to. (response categories were strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree); and, "Being a resident of [community name] is like living with a group of close friends." (responses categories ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree). The scale reliability was slightly lower than would be hoped, but is a useable Alpha=.674. Residents of Solidale (10.4) and Tryton (10.3) both reported higher local friendship networks than did residents of Lussville (9.8).

Table 4.7: Social network item across three communities, summated scale and single items[a]

| | Solidale N=292 | Tryton N=258 | Lussville N=298 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Local Friendship Network (Alpha=.674) | $10.4^{L}$ | $10.3^{L}$ | 9.8 |
| Proportion of close friends living in community (5 category) | 3.0 | $3.0^{L}$ | 2.8 |
| Usually can find someone to talk to (SD/SA) | 3.9 | 3.9 | 3.8 |
| Being a resident like living with close friends (SD/SA) | $3.5^{L}$ | $3.4^{L}$ | 3.1 |

[a]The superscript letter corresponds to community residents responding significantly more affirmative than the community identified by the superscript— $^{S}$ denotes Solidale; $^{T}$ denotes Tryton; and $^{L}$ denotes Lussville.

Another factor identified in Table 4.6 is interpreted as residents' sense of feeling a gemeinschaft-like bond with other community residents. The factor-based scale was comprised of resident responses to three seven-point semantic differential items: unfriendly/friendly, indifferent/supportive, trusting/not trusting (Table 4.8). Response consistency was relatively high with a scale reliability of Alpha=.767. In all three communities, mean resident responses were positive. Residents of Solidale reported most favorably to the items (scale score of 15.3) while Tryton residents (14.5) responded less favorably than Solidale residents but more favorably than Lussville residents (13.7). One can surmise that Solidale residents share the strongest solidary bond and Lussville residents share the weakest bond.

Three social infrastructure measures were constructed from resident assessments of the organizational culture and structure (Table 4.9). The first item is a measure of the

Table 4.8: Affective bond of solidarity measure across the three communities[a]

| | Solidale N=292 | Tryton N=258 | Lussville N=298 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gemeinschaft-like Affective Bond (Alpha=.767) | 15.3 [bc] | 14.5 [c] | 13.7 |
| Unfriendly/Friendly (7 pt. semantic differential) | 5.5 [c] | 5.4 [c] | 5.1 |
| Indifferent/Supportive | 4.9 [bc] | 4.4 | 4.2 |
| Trusting/Not Trusting | 5.0 [bc] | 4.6 | 4.4 |

[a]The superscript letter corresponds to community residents responding significantly more affirmative than the community identified by the superscript— [S] denotes Solidale; [T] denotes Tryton; and [L] denotes Lussville.

diversity of communication about community affairs among different types of individuals within the community. Diverse communication networks about community affairs reflect the potential for widespread dissemination of information within the community, which is important for mobilizing diverse individual and organizational resources. Correlational and exploratory factor analysis was conducted on a series of responses to the question "When important community issues come up in [community name], how frequently (if ever) do you discuss issues with the following people." Factor analysis did not discern more than one underlying factor to the items. The items were moderately correlated with one another and made intuitive sense to group together into a single scale. The general categories with whom a resident could indicate some level of communication included business or professional person, someone with a different political orientation, person in blue collar occupation, elected official or community leader, and someone with whom you often disagree. Response categories were very often, fairly often, sometimes, seldom, and never. There was a high degree of response consistency, with a scale reliability of Alpha=.863. Residents of all three communities reported comparable diversity of communication, although communication was moderate (3=sometimes) across all types of individuals in all communities.

The second item, an accepting organizational culture, is comprised of four items. An accepting organizational culture is also thought to be an important factor in mobilizing diverse support and resources in the community. The less accepting or more exclusive the organizational culture the less capacity for community action. Factor analysis was used to

Table 4.9: Contrast of social infrastructure items across three communities[a]

| | Solidale N=292 | Tryton N=258 | Lussville N=298 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Social Infrastructure** | | | |
| Diverse Communication (Alpha=.863) | 14.0 | 14.0 | 13.7 |
| Business or professional person (Never to often) | 3.2 | 3.1 | 3.0 |
| Someone with a different political orientation | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.7 |
| Person in a blue collar occupation | 3.1 | 3.1 | 3.1 |
| Elected official or community leader | 2.6 | 2.6 | 2.5 |
| Someone with whom you often disagree | 2.3 | 2.4 | 2.3 |
| Accepting Organizational Culture (Alpha=.725) | 13.9$^{TL}$ | 13.3$^{L}$ | 12.5 |
| Residents are receptive to new leaders (SD/SA) | 3.3$^{TL}$ | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Everyone allowed to contribute to local govt. affairs (SD/SA) | 3.9$^{TL}$ | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| Community clubs interested in what's best for all (SD/SA) | 3.6$^{TL}$ | 3.4 | 3.2 |
| People accept different racial and ethnic groups (SD/SA) | 3.2$^{L}$ | 3.5$^{SL}$ | 2.9 |
| Low Organizational Barriers (Alpha=.627) | 10.5$^{TL}$ | 9.8 | 9.9 |
| No one has asked me (SD/SA) | 3.1$^{TL}$ | 2.8 | 2.7 |
| Don't know how to get involved (SD/SA) | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.4 |
| I've tried and not been wanted (SD/SA) | 3.9 | 3.6 | 3.8 |

[a]The superscript letter corresponds to community residents responding significantly more affirmative than the community identified by the superscript— $^{S}$ denotes Solidale; $^{T}$ denotes Tryton; and $^{L}$ denotes Lussville.

determine the underlying dimensions to the items; all loaded strongly on a single factor. The scale reliability was a respectable Alpha=.725. The four likert-like items comprising the scale included responses to the following statements (with five response categories ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree): "Residents in [community name] are receptive to new residents taking leadership positions."; "Most everyone in [community name] is allowed to contribute to local governmental affairs if they want to."; "Community clubs and organizations are interested in what is best for all residents."; "People living in [community name] are willing to accept people from different racial and ethnic groups." Residents of Solidale reported the highest level of accepting organizations (13.9), followed by Tryton (13.3) and Lussville (12.5). On the individual items, Solidale residents consistently responded the most affirmative to all individual scale items except the question pertaining to

acceptance of different racial or ethnic groups, where Tryton was percieved as the most accepting.[29]

The third social infrastructure item, interpreted as an indicator of low organizational barriers to volunteering, was constructed from a battery of likert-like questions concerning why the respondent might not be involved in community activities. The reliability of the three item scale of strongly correlated and intuitively related items was a marginally acceptable Alpha=.627. The respondent indicated whether he/she strongly disagreed, disagreed, agreed, strongly agreed, or is undecided with the following three statements: "No one has asked me to volunteer for a community project;" "I don't really know how to become involved or volunteer;" "I've tried to volunteer for community projects, but the leaders did not want my help." Respondents in all three communities tended to disagree that these were barriers to their involvement.

In addition to the measures of social capital (local interaction and affective bond) and social infrastructure (communication and organizational openness) identified above, a number of controls are introduced to assess the influence of general respondent attributes.[30] Three respondent attributes that may be a basis of local stratification of interaction are examined, the sex of the respondent, gross household income,[31] and the newness of the respondent to the community (living 10 years of less in the community) Table 4.10 contains further detail. Consistent with earlier background characteristics, respondents of Solidale

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[29] Tryton was also the only town with a sizable minority population. The 14 non-white residents of Tryton who responded to the survey were less supportive of the statement than the overall sample mean, but still more likely to agree than disagree with the statement (3.1).

[30]Recalling the earlier discussion of structural network analysis, these controls are clearly inadequate because simply having certain attributes is not sufficient to generalize that there is a consistent pattern of interaction among those sharing the attribute. Additional analysis is needed to further justify the significance of these attributes in a structural sense. In the network analysis section, the significance of gender is considered in more detail.

[31] Concern about collinearity between education and income, led to only income being included as a control. Analysis of both items in the model, though, did not significantly alter the coefficient structure identified in the multivariate analysis.

Table 4.10: Contrast of demographic items across three communities[a]

| | Solidale N=292 | Tryton N=258 | Lussville N=298 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Demographic | | | |
| Gender (1=female; 0=male) (%) | 57 | 56 | 58 |
| Income (8 categories) | $4.3^{TL}$ | 3.9 | 3.8 |
| Newcomer (1=lived in community LT 10 years) (%) | $.21^{T}$ | .12 | $.19^{T}$ |

[a]The superscript letter corresponds to community residents responding significantly more affirmative than the community identified by the superscript— $^{S}$ denotes Solidale; $^{T}$ denotes Tryton; and $^{L}$ denotes Lussville.

indicated the highest income levels. Around 20 percent of Solidale and Lussville respondents were newcomers while only 12 percent of Tryton respondents were newcomers. Finally, a set of dummy codes are introduced into the analysis. A dummy code for Tryton and a dummy code for Lussville were created to account for unique community effects which are not measured by the proposed independent items. Significant dummy code effects will indicate that, net the effect of other independent variables, community of residence has an effect on the outcomes.

**Dependent Measures**

Two measures of local action are proposed as the dependent items of interest. The first item is a measure of residents' engagement in various action processes in the community. The item is constructed from a count of affirmative responses to a series of community activities in which the respondent may have participated (Table 4.11). Although this is not a measure of *community action*, the item reflects resident involvement in action processes within social fields that may or may not be community oriented. Regardless of the communityness of individual action, community involvement is important in the aggregate for mobilizing resources for community action. The three items comprising the count scale include: report belonging to at least one local organization; affirmative response to "During the past year, have you participated in any community improvement project in [community name], such as a volunteer project or fund-raising effort?"; and affirmative response to

"attended a local or regional government meeting in the last year (city council, planning and zoning commission, rural water district, etc.)." Residents of Solidale were most likely to respond affirmatively to these three items the most (1.4 of 3 activities on average), followed by Tryton (1.3) and Lussville (1.2) residents. The most common activity was being a member of a local organization (between 50 and 75 percent of each community's residents), followed by volunteering for a community project (between 36 and 49 percent of each community's residents) and attending a local governmental meeting (between 19 and 25 percent of each community's residents).

Table 4.11: Contrast of solidarity/action items across three communities

| | Solidale N=292 | Tryton N=258 | Lussville N=298 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Solidarity/Action Items** | | | |
| Individual Activeness (mean of 3 item count) | $1.4^{L}$ | 1.3 | 1.2 |
| Member of at least one local organization (%) | $75^{T}$ | 59 | $66^{T}$ |
| Volunteered for community improvement activity (%) | $49^{L}$ | 41 | 36 |
| Attended local or regional government meeting (%) | 18 | 25 | 21 |
| Community Solidarity | | | |
| When something needs to get done, whole community gets behind it (SD/SA) | $3.5^{TL}$ | $3.1^{L}$ | 2.7 |

[a]The superscript letter corresponds to community residents responding significantly more affirmative than the community identified by the superscript— $^{S}$ denotes Solidale; $^{T}$ denotes Tryton; and $^{L}$ denotes Lussville.

The second dependent measure assessed respondents' perceptions of the community working together. The likert item contained five response categories for the question "When something needs to get done in [community name], the whole community usually gets behind it." This item was identified as an approximation of the existence of community action, or at least the resident's belief that the community acts together when necessary. Respondents from Solidale were very likely to agree with this statement (3.5). Tryton respondents were mixed in their responses (3.1) and Lussville respondents were more inclined to disagree with the statement (2.7).

These two dependent items assess two levels of action. The first item is a measure of the individual's engagement in social fields within the community. While communityness of the respective social field cannot be known by this indicator, one would expect that the more people are engaged in local social fields, the greater likelihood that at least some of the action would have some degree of communityness. The second item (perceptions that the community acts) reflects the resident beliefs that community-oriented action does exist, which emerges from the various social fields or is a product of the community field.

Table 4.12 contains the total sample mean, standard deviation, and correlations for the 13 measures described above. The correlation among many of the items is weak to moderate, although several have strong associations. There is a relatively strong correlation among the affective bond, friendship network, accepting organizations and community action. The measures of local embeddedness, particularly reports of socializing regularly with other community members, also had a moderate to strong correlation (.3 to .5) with several measures of social interaction, social infrastructure, and the measure of resident involvement in local action. Interestingly, the measure of individual activeness in the community and the community action items are not strongly associated (.10). This suggests that being involved in the community and believing the community can work together are unrelated phenomena (an unexpected outcome).

### Multivariate Analysis of Theoretically Interesting Relationships

The findings of the multivariate analysis are reported in Table 4.13. The pattern of relationships were generally in the anticipated direction, although not always of the magnitude expected. The independent items are organized according to the type of item, either as a control, a measure of social capital, or a measure of social infrastructure. The two

Table 4.12: Correlations among measures (N=848)

| | | Mean | s.d. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Independent Measures** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Income | 1 | 4.0 | 2.0 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Female | 2 | .6 | .5 | -.12 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Newcomer | 3 | .2 | .4 | -.01 | .03 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| Local services | 4 | 2.6 | 1.0 | .02 | .01 | -.11 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| Work locally | 5 | .9 | .3 | -.13 | .02 | -.12 | .16 | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| Socialize locally | 6 | 3.0 | 1.1 | .18 | .08 | -.11 | .29 | .09 | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| Friend network | 7 | 10.1 | 2.3 | .03 | .04 | -.22 | .35 | .11 | .43 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| Diverse discussions | 8 | 13.9 | 4.3 | .31 | -.16 | -.09 | .11 | .02 | .36 | .25 | 1.00 | | | | |
| Affective bond | 9 | 14.5 | 3.5 | .06 | -.02 | -.01 | .24 | .03 | .27 | .51 | .15 | 1.00 | | | |
| Accepting organizations | 10 | 3.1 | .9 | .05 | .01 | -.13 | .30 | .12 | .31 | .61 | .17 | .56 | 1.00 | | |
| Low org. barriers | 11 | 10.1 | 2.3 | .21 | .09 | -.07 | .18 | .06 | .32 | .29 | .25 | .28 | .34 | 1.00 | |
| **Dependent Measures** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Individual activeness | 12 | 1.3 | 1.0 | .28 | -.06 | -.06 | .21 | .08 | .48 | .20 | .45 | .12 | .17 | .37 | 1.00 |
| Community action | 13 | 3.1 | 1.1 | .02 | .03 | -.02 | .18 | .10 | .25 | .52 | .11 | .49 | .58 | .25 | .10 |

Underlined items indicate correlation is significant at .05 level

Table 4.13: Results of multivariate model (N=556)

| | Individual Activeness | Community Acts |
|---|---|---|
| **Controls** | | |
| *Respondent Attributes* | | |
| Income | .10[a] | .00 |
| Female | -.09 | .00 |
| Newcomer | -.01 | .07 |
| *Community Controls* | | |
| Tryton | .03 | -.14 |
| Lussville | -.03 | -.21 |
| **Social Capital Measures** | | |
| *Embeddedness and Social Networks* | | |
| Services locally | .11 | -.05 |
| Work Locally | .04 | .04 |
| Socialize Locally | .32 | -.02 |
| Local Friend Network | -.08 | .21 |
| *Affective Bond* | | |
| Trust/Support/Friendly | -.07 | .18 |
| **Social Infrastructure** | | |
| Diverse comm. Networks | .24 | -.03 |
| Accepting Org. Culture | -.01 | .34 |
| Low Org. Barriers | .23 | .00 |
| **Individual Action** | | |
| Individual Activeness | | .01 |
| Adjusted R-square | .38 | .42 |
| Model F-value | 26.9* | 30.2* |

[a]coefficients reported are standardized betas. All underlined items are significant at .05 level.
*Model F-value significant at .05 level.

dependent items are modeled hierarchically, with individual activeness as the dependent measure of the first regression model and then included as an independent influence in the second equation of the model.

Resident activeness in the community was related to several measures in the model. Higher levels of income are positively associated with the likelihood of an individual being

involved in the community. Being a female resident was negatively related to individual activeness, net the effect of other items.[32] Several of the interaction items were significantly related to individual involvement, including consumption of local services and regular local socializing. Two social infrastructure measures, the existence of diverse communication networks about community affairs and perception of low organizational barriers to volunteering were positively associated with individual activeness. The regression equation was significant and 38 percent of the variance was explained.

The regression model provides support for claims that aspects of social capital have an influence on an individual's activism in local social fields. There is some stratification of involvement, however, with upper income residents and male respondents more likely to report being active, net the effects of all other items. Social infrastructure, in the form of diverse communication about community affairs and perception of low organizational barriers to involvement, has an influence on the likelihood of being involved. Interestingly, feeling an affective bond is not related to level of involvement in the community.

The pattern of relationships with the community action item starkly contrasts with the findings of the first regression model. A completely different set of independent items are related to the belief that the community acts. The regression equation is significant and 42 percent of the variance in the perception that the community acts is explained. Being a resident of Tryton and Lussville is negatively associated with a resident reporting that the community acts when something needs to get done. Two measures of social capital were significant. Local friendship networks and the affective bond were positively related to the belief the community acts. One social infrastructure item, the perception of an accepting organizational culture positively influences this belief. Thus, a mixture of interactive, affective, and organizational structure characteristics influence resident beliefs that the

[32]The relationship of income to individual activism is consistent with widely reported findings of income being a strong predictor of voluntary participation (see Smith, 1994, for a review). The relationship between volunteerism and gender has been mixed.

community acts. There also are important community-specific influences not identified in the model, but reflected in the negative association of the Tryton and Lussville dummy codes.

**Discussion of Empirical Analysis and Theoretically Interesting Hypotheses**

Findings provide support for the two hypotheses. The following discussion links the empirical findings to each of the hypothesis.

**Hypothesis #1**

Support for the first hypothesis (that social capital influences community action) is mixed, particularly since the two items anticipated to approximate community action (an individual's local activism and a belief that the community acts) appear to be dissimilar concepts. The dissimilarity between the two concepts, in hindsight, is not necessarily surprising. Individual activism in local social fields can have varying levels of communityness; individuals who report community activism may or may not be participating in an activity that can be defined as community action. A scale constructed from measures of individual involvement in activities with a high degree of communityness may be a better proxy (which is not possible with the available data). Only one of the three items comprising the individual activeness scale was specifically community-oriented (involvement in a community improvement activity).

Both regression models provide empirical support for the social capital measures, but the relationships are different for the two dependent measures of action. Different types of embedded interaction influence individual activeness in the community and the belief that the community acts. Individuals whose consumption and socializing are embedded in the community are more inclined to get involved in local activities. The existence of local friendship networks was significantly related to the belief that the community acts. The

analysis provides support for the expectation that the affective bond influences community action, but there is no relationship between an affective bond and individual activeness.

Social capital in the form of local interaction networks and an affective bond do have implications for local action, but different interaction structures are associated with individual action in the community and general community action. Friendship networks and affective solidarity are associated with the belief that the community acts, while social and consumptive interaction embedded in the community are associated with individual activism.

**Hypothesis #2**

There is also support for the second hypothesis. All three social infrastructure items were found to influence either individual activeness or the belief that the community acts. The existence of diverse communication about community affairs and the perception of low organizational barriers to volunteering were positively associated with an individual's level of involvement. The perception of an accepting organizational culture was positively associated with a belief that the community can act.

Again, the consistency of relationships was not the same for both dependent items. Communication and low barriers may contribute to an individual engaging in particular social fields while the general openness of local organizations is associated with the existence of a belief that the community acts. Social infrastructure contributes to both the mobilization of individuals within social fields as well as influences a perception that the community can act when necessary.

In addition, while the control variables do not identify a specific facet of social infrastructure which is strong or weak, these variables do point to potential weaknesses of social infrastructure in all three communities, net the effect of all other items in the models. The finding that women are less active in the community and that upper income residents are more involved suggest additional barriers to participation, not measured by the social

infrastructure items. The implication may be that the community is not accessing the full array of resources that residents can contribute to action in the social fields or community action.

Even more interesting is the significant negative effect of community of residence (both Tryton and Lussville dummy codes) on resident belief that the community acts. This finding indicates that there are some significant characteristics of the community that influence community action which are not operationalized by the models. Either Solidale has superior structures which facilitate action or Tryton and Lussville have inferior structures which impede community action. The magnitude of the Lussville dummy code indicates further that this community has some attributes that have a negative effect in excess of Tryton. The effect of the dummy codes are in addition to the indirect effects of community of residence resulting from individual items in the model. Recall the bivariate analysis which revealed a consistent pattern of Tryton and Lussville being lower than Solidale on individual measures.[33]

**Conclusions from the Empirical Analysis**

Most of the important findings have already been noted, but a few concluding remarks are necessary to direct attention to two important issues relevant to the forthcoming network analysis. Previous interactional community analysis has not focused on the interactional characteristics of local residents and local action. One reason may be data limitations, that exist in this analysis as well. A key finding, however, is that interaction appears to be an important factor to consider in relation to individual action in the community and the perception of community action. Liberated personal networks transcending spatial

[33] Exploratory structural modeling of the variables, where the controls variables are linked to the social capital and social infrastructure items and are then linked to the action items, found significant negative indirect effects of both community dummy codes. Further, the total negative effect of Lussville was double the negative effect of Tryton.

boundaries has dominated much of the structural analysis of the community (Wellman, 1979; Wellman and Leighton, 1979). The finding that embedded consumption, local resident socializing, and the existence of local friendship networks recall some of the "community saved" findings of Hunter (1975).[34] These spatially based interaction patterns are important factors affecting community action and need to be included in further structural analysis of the interactional community. Further, the finding that working locally is related to neither action item suggests the need for further systematic determination of the type of local interaction that has the greatest influence on community involvement and a community's capacity to act.

Regression analysis indicates social capital has an influence on local action processes. There is also support for believing the structure and character of the organizational culture (social infrastructure) is an important influence on community action. All three social infrastructure items were found to be significant. Further, the finding that level of income and gender influence individual involvement in the community and that place of residence influences a belief that the community acts raises the question about what unmeasured structural characteristics contribute to stratification of individual involvement in the community and the varying levels of believing the community acts.

An interesting finding unrelated to the two hypotheses is the discovery that individual action and perceptions of community action are relatively unrelated with different interactional antecedents. One can argue that the structural attributes leading to an individual participating in local social fields are different from the structures resulting in social fields acquiring a high degree of communityness. Two implications of this are noteworthy: First, individual action seemingly cannot necessarily be aggregated into community action—contrary to rational choice explanations that suggest one can know the whole by its parts. The second and corollary implication is that further examination of the community field (the

[34] That place based community remains relevant despite urbanization and industrialization.

interactional field where the community interest is generalized) may provide an understanding of how local action processes originating in social fields become community oriented. The network analysis in the next chapter should help assess the existence and inclusiveness of the community field.

Table 4.14 summarizes some the findings of the empirical analysis. In the next chapter, direct examination of organizational and leadership structures in each community will explicate the strong community specific effects on individual assessment of community action potential and add further depth to the basic understanding of the interactional community.

Table 4.14: Summary of Chapter 4 empirical analysis

| Analysis | Conclusion |
|---|---|
| Empirical Analysis | |
| Findings | 1) Community of residence has a direct effect on perceptions of community-wide action for the collective good. 2) Community of residence does not have a significant direct effect on individual activism. 3) The diversity of one's political consultation networks is positively related to one's activism, but not to one's perception that the community can act. 4) Having an organizational culture which is accepting of diversity contributes to a perception that the community can act. 5) Individual action and perceptions of community action are relatively unrelated, with different interactional antecedents. Structural attributes leading to individual participation in local social fields are different from the structures resulting in social fields showing a high degree of communityness. |
| Hypotheses | Supported, although mixed pattern of association between social capital and social infrastructure and outcome measures. |
| General Conclusions | The structure and character of individual and organizational interaction within a geographic community has implications for participation in local action and believing that the whole community can work together.<br>Interestingly, reports of individual activism do not aggregate into a belief that the whole community can act.<br>The existence of significant community effects, net the influence of other measures in the empirical models requires more direct examination of local social structures, such as the existence of a community field and community action processes. |

# CHAPTER 5. NETWORK ANALYSIS

Network analysis is a technique of structural analysis that can be used to analyze relationships among organizations and/or individuals. In this chapter, network analysis of facets of the local organizational structure and leadership consultation networks will provide further data for testing the dissertation's second hypothesis—that social infrastructure is related to community action. The previous chapter's analysis determined that inclusiveness and diversity make a difference for individual activism and community action. In this chapter, actual structures are reviewed to determine how diverse and inclusive they are and identify how they may lead to increase individual mobilization for action or improve the capacity for community action. Examination of each community's organizational and leadership structures may also shed light on the finding of a direct negative effect of being a resident of Lussville and Tryton on a belief that the community acts.

## Network Analysis Techniques

In Chapter 2, structural network literature was reviewed to elaborate the interactional community perspective. A number of analytic techniques have been proposed in this literature, several of which will be utilized in the following analysis. A brief review of network analysis techniques provides some basic background for understanding the analysis.

A social network is "a set of nodes (e.g. persons, organizations) linked by a set of social relationships (e.g. friendship, transfer of funds, overlapping membership) of a specified type" (Lauman, et al., 1977). The nodes discussed in this analysis include persons and organizations; the relationships considered are personal consultation, overlapping organizational leadership, and activation for community action. To interpret the relationships among the various nodes two important graph theory concepts are used, centrality and cliques. Measures of centrality are useful for ascertaining persons or organizations that hold

strategic positions within an overall network. Clique analysis is useful for identifying groups of tightly connected individuals or organizations. Conversely, centrality and clique analysis helps identify individuals or organizations on the periphery of a network.

The relational data for this analysis were organized into binary matrices of individual by organization or individual by individual where a 0 reflects no relationship and 1 indicates the existence of a relationship. The data was treated as undirected meaning that if A indicated a relationship with B, it was assumed B likewise was related to A. The consultation networks could have been treated as directed, meaning A's affirmation of a relationship does not imply B feels the same. Incomplete networks due to partial sampling of community residents makes analysis of directed relationships problematic. Once the matrices were constructed, analysis was aided by two software programs. For the mathematical and complex matrix calculations, UCINET (Borgatti, 1992) was used. Krackplot (Krackhardt, et al., 1992) was useful for constructing visual representations of the network findings.

Generally speaking the analysis is based on graphs where points or nodes (persons or organizations) are connected by lines (relationships). A point can be locally central (numerous direct ties to other points surrounding it) or globally central (holding a significant position in the overall network structure). Clique analysis seeks to find subgraphs of points that are maximally connected to each other. A stringent clique definition requires each point to be connected to all other points in the clique. A more realistic assessment relaxes this requirement, allowing for the absence of some small number of connections.[35]

Three types of relational data are analyzed. The first type is organizational leadership data. In each of the three communities, data were collected about officers, elected officials, and boards of directors of local organizations, institutions, government bodies, and corporate businesses. A matrix of individual leaders by organizations was constructed from this

[35]For a more thorough treatment of network analysis techniques there are a number of excellent methodological texts (for example, see a conversational explanation by Scott, 1991, or a technical treatment in Wasserman and Faust, 1994).

information. From this matrix, two adjacency matrices are extrapolated. One matrix identifies how individuals are linked to each other through common membership on various boards. The other matrix identifies how organizations are connected to other organizations where links result from individuals holding multiple leadership positions. The second type of relational data is from reputational and organizational leaders who reported who he/she consulted about community affairs. There is a possibility a leader may indicate consulting with a person whose consultation network is not known, so the edges of the consultation network must be interpreted cautiously. The third type of relational data, which will be discussed qualitatively, is organizational and individual participation in community action processes. Data from several community projects may illustrate the opportunities and obstacles resulting from the previously identified organizational and leadership structures.

Consistent with these three types of relational data, this network analysis has three components. The first step is analysis of organizational networks, the second step examines local leadership structures. The third step, found in the next chapter, reviews recent community action in relation to the first two steps. In all three steps, close attention is given to the inclusiveness of local structures and action processes, the capacity for resources to flow through the network structures, and the linkages that are most useful to a project's success. Where the network structures are diverse and inclusive, it is expected there will be a greater capacity for community action. In addition to diverse and inclusive social infrastructure, the existence of a community field which can coordinate action and help build a consensus will be of interest.

### Organizational Networks (interlocking directorates)

A roster of local organizations, institutions, governmental boards, businesses and corporate organizations was developed for each community from reviews of local primary documents, telephone directories, government records, newspaper records, and interviews

with local knowledgeables. Leadership rosters were compiled from information provided by organizational representatives or from printed materials generated by the organization or institution.[36] In each of the three communities there is high confidence that data from nearly all local organizations and relevant county organizations were collected with corroboration provided by local informants who reviewed the lists. One shortcoming however must be noted. When the data were collected, a decision was made to gather information about the leadership of the local ministerial association but not boards and officers of the individual churches. This oversight has been partially corrected with the collection of leader data from about two-thirds of the local churches (a total of 39 were identified in the three communities). Because of the incompleteness of this data, church board leadership is not included in the following analysis.[37]

Leaders of 62 organizations and institutions were identified in Solidale. These 62 organizations yielded 361 individuals who held at least one local leadership position. Information on 38 organizations and institutions in Tryton was collected, with 179 individuals identified as leaders. In Lussville, information from 45 organizations and institutions with 223 individual leaders was collected (Table 5.1).

Basic component analysis of the organizational adjacency matrix reduced the number of organizations and institutions to be analyzed. A component is a "maximal connected sub-graph" (Scott, 1991:104), meaning it is the largest sub-graph of the entire matrix where all points in the graph can be connected to all other points in the sub-graph by one or more paths. In Solidale, two components were identified. The largest contained 51 organizations

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[36]An immediate concern with the data collection technique is the fact that terms for holding a leadership position can vary. For example, some civic organizations have terms that match the calendar year while others have terms matching the school year. This is data of officer and board rosters for the summer and fall months of 1996.

[37] Some churches were unwilling to provide the information and others did not respond to the survey requesting the information. Data from interviews with local informants suggest that in none of the three communities is there a dominant church with members holding a majority of leadership positions in the community. In communities with fewer churches, this is a possible source of local stratification and an important issue to explore.

Table 5.1: Summary of organizational data and basic component analysis

| | Solidale | Tryton | Lussville |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Organizational Data** | | | |
| Total Organizations | 62 | 38 | 45 |
| Total Individuals | 361 | 179 | 223 |
| Component analysis of organizational adjacency matrix | | | |
| Largest Component: Organizations | 51 | 24 | 39 |
| Largest Component: Individuals | 81 | 25 | 42 |
| Isolated Organizations | 9 | 12 | 4 |

linked by 81 individuals. These 81 individuals can be defined as interorganizational leaders because they serve on more than one board in the community.[38] A second component contained two organizations linked by two individuals. Nine organizations in the community had no interorganizational leaders.

Two organizational components were found in Tryton. The first component consisted of 24 organizations linked by 25 individuals. The second component consisted of two organizations linked by two individuals. There were 12 isolated organizations in Tryton. In Lussville there were two components with the first consisting of 39 organizations and 42 individuals and the second composed of two organizations and a single individual. There were four isolated organizations in Lussville.

The basic organizational summary and component analysis reveals a number of facets of each community's organizational structure. Solidale has a large structure with many organizations and large numbers of organizational officers and board members (an average of 5.82 leaders per organization). Lussville and Tryton have smaller organizational structures with a smaller number of organizational officers and board members (an average of 4.96

[38] Perucci and Pilisuk (1970) define interorganizational leaders as leaders holding four or more organizational memberships. Those holding one, two, or three positions are called organizational leaders. With 1,677 total leaders identified in their research and 309 holding two or more leadership positions, their definition allows for a manageable universe of leaders to study (26). In these case studies, all persons holding two or more organizational leadership positions are defined as interorganizational leaders. As the discussion progresses, some leaders holding a large number of leadership positions will be identified.

leaders per organization in Lussville and 4.59 leaders per organization in Tryton). Further, Solidale had a much larger number of local residents who were leaders of two or more organizations (83 individuals) compared to Lussville (44 individuals) and Tryton (27 individuals). The differences in organizational density was evident during the field work. For example, a number of active organizations involving numerous local residents were directly observed in Solidale. In Tryton, there were fewer local organizations and nowhere near the same level of individual involvement in Solidale.

The next three subsections provide additional description of each community's largest organizational component.

**Centrality and Clique Analysis of Solidale Organizations**

With the largest component in Solidale containing 51 organizations, the density of ties among organizations makes visual presentation of the network difficult. Instead, there are a couple of measures of centralization which aid in identifying the nodes occupying important positions in the overall network structure. Two commonly accepted measures of centrality are degree and betweenness (Freeman, 1978).[39] The degree of a point is the number of points that are directly connected to it. Thus, if there are 5 organizations linked to an organization, its degree is 5. Degree can be standardized to reflect the degree of connections as a ratio of the total possible connections. According to Freeman (1978), interest in degree centrality of a point is to identify points which have high visibility and potential for communication. "A person [or organization] who is in a position that permits direct contact with many others should begin to see himself and be seen by those others as a major channel of information" (219-220). A point with low centrality is on the periphery and may be isolated from communication within the network. The degree of a node is "important

[39] A third measure, farness, is identified by Freeman (1978) which does not provide much more insight than degree or betweenness reported in this analysis.

as an index of its potential communication activity" (p. 221). Betweenness is a measure of the tendency for a point to fall between other pairs of points. A point is central when it consistently occupies a strategic position between other points.[40] The logic, according to Freeman, is that a point can potentially control communication if it is between other points.

In addition to explaining the centrality (or lack of centrality) of points, respective measures for each type of centrality have been developed which provide a sense of the overall centrality of a network. The global measure of centrality reflects a tendency for a single point to be central in an overall graph, or conversely for all points to be equally central to each other. Stars, where one point occupies a center and all other points are connected to it, or wheels, where each point is joined to two other points that in sum create a circle or wheel, represent highly centralized graphs. All nodes connected to all other nodes would be the most decentralized type of graph.

Global measures of network centrality in Solidale confirm there are numerous connections between points in the graph and that no single point holds a dominant position in terms of degree or betweenness (Table 5.2). On average, each organization in the largest component shares a leader or officer with 11.7 percent of the other organizations (approximately six of the 51 organizations in the component). There are a number of organizations with linkages in excess of the mean. The Solidale Development Corporation, a local non-profit development group with a relatively large board (15 members) and a very active organization in the community, is linked to 17 organizations, or 34 percent of the 51 total organizations in the component. The Development Corporation appears to have strategically developed some of these linkages by electing board members who hold

[40] A measure of a points betweenness exists. To determine a points betweenness, one sums the probabilities that a point is located between all other pairs of points in the graph. Thus, if there are two points which can be linked through three different intermediaries, each of these intermediary points has a probability of .33 of being located between the pair of points. The sum of the probabilities of a point being between all pairs in the graph equals its betweenness value. Freeman (1978) has proposed an adjustment which allows the betweenness value to be compared across graphs with varying numbers of points. This adjusted betweenness value is what is reported in the subsequent tables.

Table 5.2: Central organizations in largest Solidale component (51 organizations)

| Degree Centrality | | | Betweenness Centrality | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Organization | # of links | % of all orgs. | | Between |
| Solidale Development Corp. | 17 | 34 | Parent Teach Board | .19 |
| Science Museum | 17 | 34 | Non-profit Housing Group | .17 |
| Hospital Endowment | 15 | 30 | Chamber of Commerce | .16 |
| Non-profit Housing Group | 14 | 28 | Science Museum | .14 |
| Solid Bank A | 13 | 26 | City Council | .13 |
| Hospital Board | 13 | 26 | School Board | .10 |
| Recreation Center | 12 | 24 | For-profit housing group | .09 |
| For-profit housing group | 11 | 22 | Women's Sorority A | .08 |
| Solid Bank B | 10 | 20 | Hospital Board | .08 |
| Chamber of Commerce | 10 | 20 | Solid Bank A | .06 |
| Average Organization | 5.8 | 11.7 | Average Organization | .04 |

leadership positions throughout the community (all 15 board members are interorganizational leaders, holding an average of 2.67 positions in other local organizations).[41]

The other organization having highest degree centrality is the Science Museum. There is a strong connection between the Science Museum and the Development Corporation with five board members (nearly 30 percent of the total board) of the recently developed museum serving on the Development Corporation's board. Other members of the Science Museum board appear to strategically represent a variety of other community organizations (12 of the 17 board members serve on other boards in the largest component).

With numerous links among organizations in the component, no organizations hold central betweenness positions. In other words, there are almost no organizations singularly located between two significant portions of the graph. The example of the Parent Teacher Board (Table 5.2) having the highest betweenness in the graph is a function of it serving as the only link between two peripheral women's organizations and the rest of the graph—giving it a modest boost in betweenness. The boost is modest because the parent teacher

[41] In addition, but not included in the analysis, is an advisory board to the Development Corporation consisting of prominent local leaders of a number of other institutions and organizations.

board is peripheral itself and has little connection to the more densely connected portions of the graph.

A point with a betweenness score of 1.00 indicates it is between everything, as is the case of a point at the center of a star (all surrounding points connected only to the center of the star). The extremely low average betweenness (.04) reflects the diversity of linkages in Solidale's largest organizational component. In practical terms, no single organization in Solidale appears to have substantial control over the flow of information or resources due to overlapping leadership.

What does the analysis of Solidale's largest component reveal? First, there are a sizable number of connections among the various organizations within the network due to many individuals holding multiple leadership positions. The propensity in Solidale to have relatively large boards encourages overlap. Secondly, the multiple connections contribute to an overall network that is not highly centralized. In other words, the numerous links result in multiple paths for accessing other organizations in the graph rather than having to rely on single nodes to access certain potions of the graph. Of course, interlocking directorates are not the only means by which organizations are linked so it is important to not overstate the assertions of what interorganizational relationships do or do not exist.

Field work in Solidale confirms the strategic importance of the Development Corporation in the overall flow of information and resources within the community; clique analysis corroborates this assertion. There is a particularly interesting clique that emerges from the 51 organizations in Solidale's largest component. A clique consists of three or more nodes that are all adjacent (linked) to one another (Wasserman and Faust, 1994). This is a rather strict definition of a clique since in a large subgraph the absence of one link prevents the subgraph from being defined as a clique. Less strict criteria exist for a k-plex, which allows each node a specified number of missing links, or a k-core, which requires each node be connected to a minimum number of other nodes. In the following subgroup analysis,

a k-core approach is taken requiring each clique member to be connected to at least half the other clique members.

There are several three member cliques found among Solidale's 51 organizations, but at the core is a relatively large clique of 10 organizations (Figure 5.1). Twenty-three individuals holding a total of 70 leadership positions create this densely interlocked clique. Ninety-one percent (all but three) of the total possible linkages among the clique members exist. Two missing links are associated with the fact that banks are precluded from sharing board members and the community trust being administered by one of the banks. There are an average of 2.3 interorganizational leaders per organization. Several of the organizations comprising this clique emerged as spin-offs of community action originating from the Development Corporation, such as the Science Museum and the two housing groups.

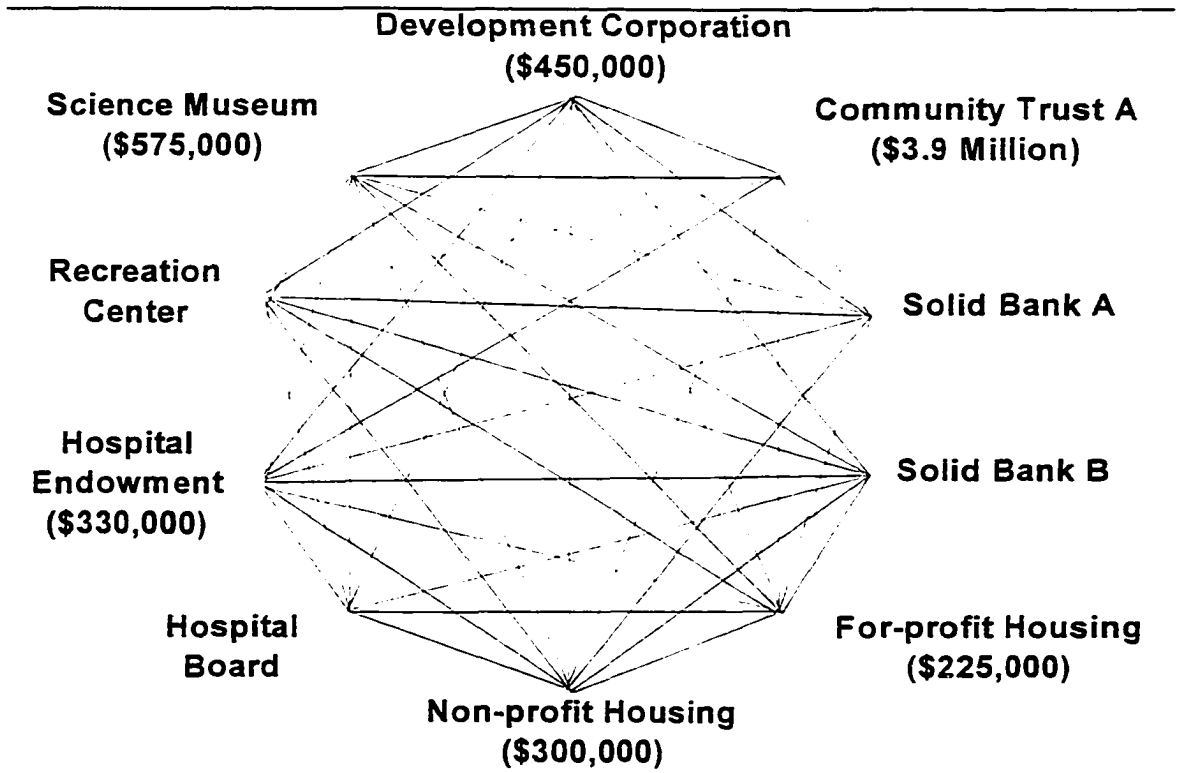


Figure 5.1: Largest Solidale clique

Not only is the density of connections among these core members striking, but the resources available for community development activities are also notable. The development group has assets in excess of $450,000 (mostly undeveloped property). Community Trust A (established from the estate of a former local banker) has assets in excess of $3.9 million, the two housing groups have combined assets in excess of $500,000 (in cash and unsold housing properties), the Hospital Endowment is over $300,000, and the Science Museum has an endowment of nearly $600,000.

Another striking fact about this core group is that only one of the 23 interorganizational leaders creating the linkages within the clique is a woman. The lone woman serves on the Hospital Board and the Hospital Endowment Board. Few women serve as leaders on any of the ten clique organizations, significantly limiting the possibility that a women could be an interorganizational leader within the clique. None of the 15 Development Corporation board members are women (only two of the 18 Development Corporation's advisory board members are women); two of the 13 nonprofit housing corporation board members are women; and none of the 12 for-profit housing board members are women. Women clearly do not hold leadership within this clique.

Collapsing this densely linked core of organizations into a single entity and then conducting clique and centrality analysis reveals how central this group of organizations is within Solidale's overall organizational culture. The component of 51 organizations was not centralized around any particular node (organization). When one considers the largest clique of 10 organizations as a single entity (not an unreasonable assumption given the density of interlocks among the clique members) a high level of overall network centralization is uncovered. Table 5.3 contains global measures of network centralization for the component containing 51 organizations and the network of the collapsed clique and forty-one organizations. The network with the collapsed clique has a high degree of betweenness centralization, indicating the collapsed clique holds a strategic position capable of controlling

Table 5.3: Global Centralization comparisons of Solidale networks[42]

| Network | Degree | Betweenness |
|---|---|---|
| Component of 51 organizations | 23.22 | 15.37 |
| Collapsed core with 41 organizations | 49.39 | 65.68 |

or directing the flow of information within the overall organizational network. Degree centralization increases as well with the core being connected to 23 of the other 41 organizations.

Further bolstering the capability of the core to direct resources and access information is its strong links to a number of community institutions and organizations. Figure 5.2 contains a diagram of the collapsed core of ten organizations and those organizations and institutions linked to three or more of the core organizations. Multiple linkages exist between the local History Museum, the library, the local governmental housing authority, Community Trust B, the Corn Growers, the recently developed ethanol plant, a group which organizes Solidale's annual entry in the statewide community betterment award competition, and the School Board. The ethanol plant, History Museum, and library have received significant support from core organizations. The figure also identifies the limited linkages among the eight organizations tightly associated with the core which illustrates how the core holds a central position between these community organizations and institutions.

At the periphery of the largest component are a number of organizations with leaders that are not as tightly integrated into the organizational structure. Table 5.4 contains a list of the organizations that are either isolated from or peripheral within the largest component (low degree and betweeness centrality). While core groups were largely dominated by men, many of isolated or peripheral organizations are dominated by women. There are seven chapters of

[42] Measures of graph centrality examine the centrality of a point relative to all other points in the graph. The measure does not reflect an average for a point, but the average of a point relative to other points. Thus, a point that is very central to many points that are not central results in a higher level of network centralization.

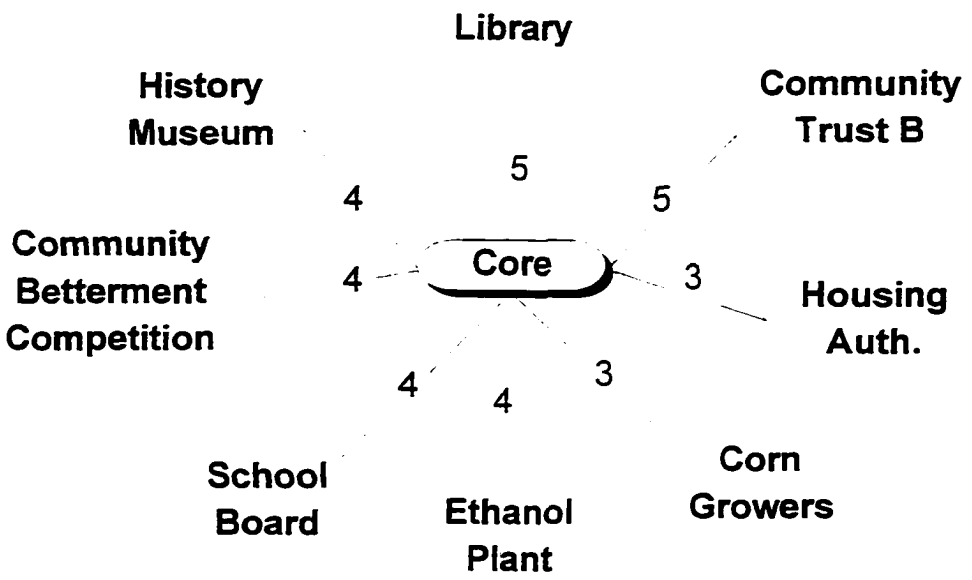


Figure 5.2: Solidale core and strongly linked organizations—number of links identified

Beta Sigma Phi (a women's sorority) in Solidale; five of the seven are either isolated or on the periphery. Of the other two sorority chapters, one is linked to one core organization and the other is linked to two core organizations. Other isolated or peripheral women's organizations include the Manor Auxiliary, Hospital Auxiliary, the AAUW, a women's Christian club, a nonprofit child care organization, and the board of the County Crisis Center. Data from the resident survey found women in Solidale reported being organizational leaders at the same rate as Solidale men (further discussed in the next section), so the failure to link is apparently not the result of women holding no organizational leadership positions in the community.

The significance of traditionally women-dominated organizations in community affairs should not be trivialized because they are found on the periphery of a network with a core of well-funded, development-oriented organizations. For example, a local thrift shop organized and staffed by the Hospital Auxiliary since 1973 has contributed over $400,000

Table 5.4: Isolated and peripheral Solidale organizations

| Type of Organizations | Isolated | Periphery of Component |
|---|---|---|
| Women Dominated Org. | Child Care Organization | AAUW |
| | County Manor Auxiliary | Friends of the Library |
| | Eastern Star | Hospital Auxiliary |
| | Women's Christian Club | Women's Sorority D |
| | Women's Sorority A | Women's Sorority E |
| | Women's Sorority B | Women's Sorority F |
| | | Women's Crisis Center |
| Other Organizations | Branch Bank | Extension Board |
| | Environmental Education org. | Humane Society |
| | JayCees | |
| | Ministerial Organization | |
| | VFW | |

through 1996 to the local hospital and Hospital Endowment. This amount nearly matches the current assets of the male-led local development corporation organized in the mid-1960s.

Summarizing the organizational structure in terms of social infrastructure, the large number of organizations in Solidale and the close linkages among many of them allow for the possibility that a considerable amount of information, support, and financial aid can be accessed through the network structure. The existence of a large core at the heart of Solidale with tremendous financial resources as well as a number of recent community institutions that have emerged from this core illustrates the capacity to mobilize resources. Also the large number of interorganizational leaders (N=81) in the community and the large number of individuals linking core organizations (N=23) may allow for widespread flow of information in the community.

Even as the potential of the structure is recognized, there are some obvious shortcomings in terms of diversity and inclusiveness. The core of the structure consists of male led organizations. There are numerous women led organizations in the community, but most of these are either isolated or on the periphery of the larger organizational structure.

Thus, the flow of ideas and resources between core and peripheral organizations may be limited and concerns or ideas of women may not generate the interest or support that other community issues receive.

Concerning the existence of a community field in Solidale, the finding is mixed. Wilkinson and other interactionists provide no specific criteria for what a generalized community field looks like, perhaps in deference to the incredible diversity that can exist. In Solidale, there is a community field—but the problem of exclusiveness raises doubts about the generalized community interaction within the field. The organizations comprising the core of Solidale represent a number of different social fields: health care, business and development, local housing, culture and recreation. There are some important social fields absent or without direct links to the community field, such as local government and many types of social services. The absence of women and women's organizations is the clearest weakness of the possible community field.

**Centrality and Clique Analysis of Tryton Organizations.**

A much different structure of interlocking directorates exists in Tryton where fewer local organizations are found. With 70 percent of Solidale's population, Tryton has only 61 percent as many local organizations. Data from 38 local organizations and institutions identified 179 unique individuals (half as many leaders as were identified in Solidale). There was one large component of 24 organizations, a small component of just two organizations, and 12 isolated organizations. Generally, Tryton organizations do not have as many officers or board members as Solidale (4.6 per board in Tryton versus 5.82 per board in Solidale). Officers are also not as likely to serve on multiple boards in Tryton. This is evident when comparing the average number of direct links among organizations in Tryton's largest component (2.4 links per organization) compared to the average in Solidale's largest component (5.8 links per organization).

In addition to there being fewer organizations and interorganizational leaders, the overall network is sparsely connected. In terms of degree (direct linkages among nodes), the Tryton network is not very centralized (Table 5.5). Several organizations have multiple linkages, but none is linked to more than about a quarter of the other organizations. Two organizations, a local bank and the local government's planning and zoning board, are linked to six organizations. The Development Authority (another entity associated with local government), the Country Club, Chamber of Commerce, and the Lions Club are each connected to four organizations.

Table 5.5: Central organizations in largest Tryton component (24 organizations)

| Degree Centrality | | | Betweenness Centrality | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Organization | # of links | % of all orgs. | | Between |
| Try Bank A | 6 | 26 | Try Bank A | .61 |
| Planning and Zoning Bd. | 6 | 26 | Lions Club | .50 |
| Development Authority | 4 | 17 | Development Authority | .38 |
| Country Club | 4 | 17 | Planning and Zoning Bd. | .30 |
| Chamber of Commerce | 4 | 17 | Chamber of Commerce | .28 |
| Lions Club | 4 | 17 | Rotary Club | .17 |
| Average Organization | 2.4 | 10.5 | Average Organization | .12 |

In terms of betweenness some centralization exists among Tryton organizations. Located near the middle of the network and occupying a strategic position between one side of the network and the other side are Try Bank A, the Lions Club, and the Development Authority. Figure 5.3 contains a diagram of these central organizations and those organizations with direct connections to them. Organizations with the most links (4+) are bolded and underlined in the graph. The centrality of the Try Bank A is a result of it being the single linkage between several organizations found in the upper left corner of the figure and the organizations in the lower right corner. To a lesser extent, the Lions is also a link between the lower right corner and the rest of the graph.

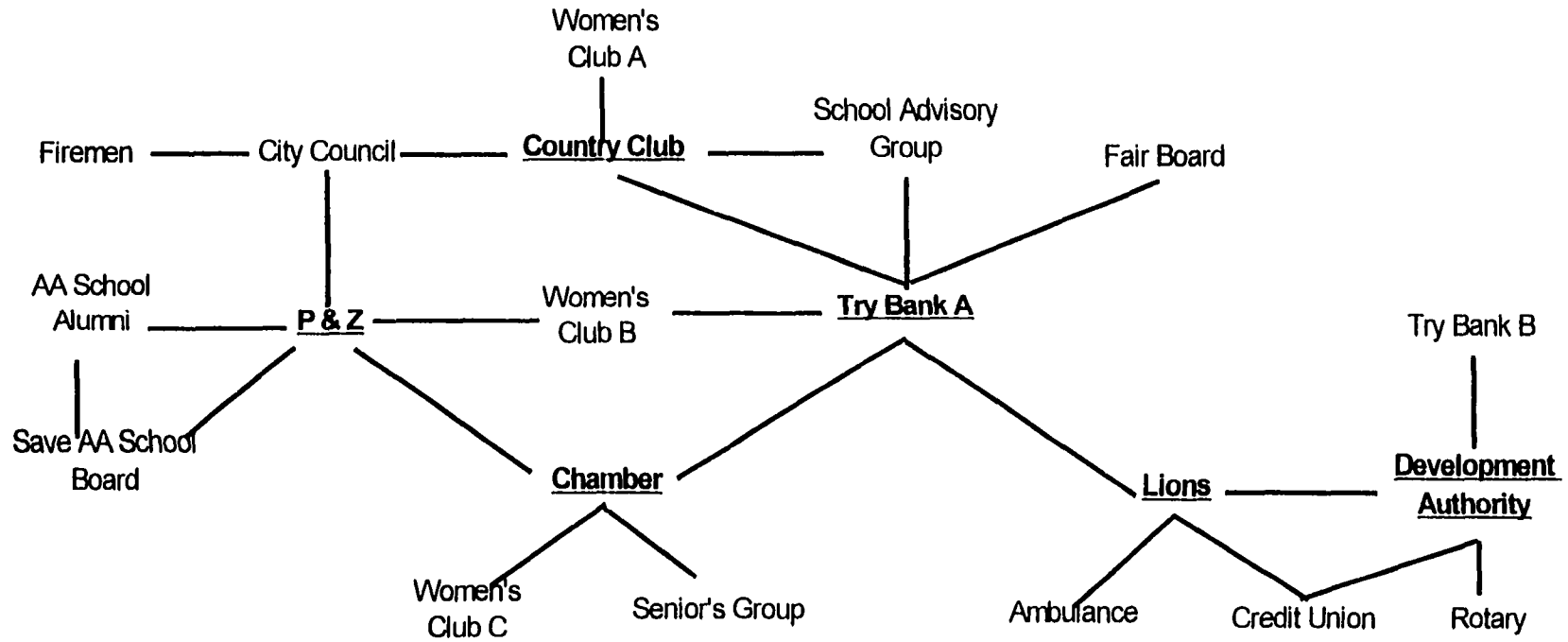


Figure 5.3: Tryton most central organizations and organizations with direct links (N=20 organizations)

The graph is relatively sparse, with few connections among organizations outside the five or six central organizations. There is no core clique or any clique of more than three organizations. There are three cliques of three organizations: 1) the Country Club, School Advisory Board (a volunteer board to advise school administration), and Try Bank A; 2) the African-American School Alumni Organization, a committee to save the pre-segregation African-American school building, and the planning and zoning commission; and 3) the Lions, Credit Union, and Development Authority. The organization with the most links, Try Bank A, is a result of bank officers being generally encouraged to be involved in the community rather than the pattern in Solidale where organizational leaders are purposefully recruited to serve as links from their respective organization to the Solidale's Development board. The role of the Try Bank A may be more as a strategic broker and coalition building structure rather than as an interactional nexus for coordinating organizations as is the case in Solidale.

One other difference between the Tryton network and the Solidale network is the location of women's organizations in the structure. While only one of the twenty-three leaders creating links among the most dense clique in Solidale were women, ten of the 25 interorganizational leaders linking organizations in Tryton's largest component are women. Of the five Greater Federated Women's Clubs in Tryton, three are found in Figure 5.3. The women's clubs were recognized by male and female informants as important, active local organizations. These women's clubs, and women in general, are active and engaged in Tryton's leadership structure (albeit a sparse structure).

The sparseness of Tryton's organizational culture results in a number of organizations being isolated. Several of the isolated organizations are regional groups and include leadership from outside the Tryton area. These organizations include the Corn Growers, the Tri-County Nursing Home, the School Board, the County Extension Council, and the county branch library. Other isolated organizations include the Ministerial Alliance, the Masons,

VFW Auxiliary, the Oddfellows, an agricultural men's club, two women's clubs, and the Jay-Cees.

In stark contrast to the resource and organizational capacity of Solidale and its highly coordinated community field (albeit not as inclusive as it is could be), Tryton's organizational capacity is limited (both in number and in resources). There also is an apparent absence of an interactive field where the respective social fields can be coordinated for achieving shared community goals. The sparseness of the organizational network, the less developed resource capacity of these organizations, and the limited number of organizational leaders coupled with field observations of what might be called a "tired" organizational culture leads one to the conclusion that the community may have limited capacity for community action. This assertion suggests a weakness in the Chapter 2 discussion of social infrastructure and the community field. The implicit assumption is that there is some level of organizational capacity where diversity and inclusiveness becomes a concern. In the case of Tryton, many of the organizations simply struggle to generate enough interest for their continued existence, let alone raise concerns about diversity and inclusiveness. For example, a motivated young resident was identified during the first visit who was attempting to organize a Jay-Cee organization. By the second community visit the venture had been abandoned due to lack of interest.

If a more vital and coordinated organizational structure should emerge in Tryton, it would likely be inclusive, since women and African American oriented organizations are recognized in the mix of local organizations. Several women's groups and two African American groups (identified with the prefix AA) can be found within the mix of organizations found in Figure 5.3. Also, the community survey found that women and African Americans agreed with the statements that the community's organizational culture was accepting of diversity.

The structure identified in Tryton suggests a limited capacity for coordinated action, not because certain community groups are excluded but because there doesn't appear to be structures designed to draw the diversity together. In sum, the community field appears to be weak to non-existent and the potential utility of the local social infrastructure is latent until there is more organizational vitality and the development of links tying organizational capacity together.

**Centrality and Clique Analysis of Lussville Organizations**

A third structural pattern is found in Lussville. Leadership information was collected from 45 organizations, institutions, and corporate bodies in Lussville. Thirty-nine boards were linked in a single component with four organizations isolated and another two connected only to each other. Each organization in the largest component is linked to an average of 4.4 other organizations in the network, although there are several organizations that significantly exceed the mean. The overall network is not very centralized, with multiple links between various network regions.

The most central organizations in terms of degree centrality (Table 5.6) are the Chamber of Commerce, City Council, a City Council Advisory Committee exploring the issue of hiring a city manager, and the Hospital Foundation Board (the money-raising wing of the county hospital). The most central organization in terms of betweenness (although not

Table 5.6: Central organizations within largest Lussville component (39 organizations)

| Degree Centrality | | | Betweenness Centrality | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Organization | # of links | % of all orgs. | | Between |
| Chamber of Commerce | 12 | 32 | Hospital Board | .30 |
| City Council | 11 | 29 | Chamber of Commerce | .25 |
| City Council Advisory Cm. | 11 | 29 | Hospital Foundation | .20 |
| Hospital Foundation | 10 | 26 | Wellness Center Committee | .17 |
| Race Track Dev. Comm. | 9 | 24 | City Council | .14 |
| Country Club | 8 | 21 | Race Track Dev. Comm. | .13 |
| Average Organization | 4.4 | 11.5 | Average Organization | .06 |

very central given the small score) is the County Hospital Board, followed by the Chamber, Hospital Foundation and a recently formed committee exploring the possibility of developing a local wellness center.

The Lussville organizational network has two interesting clusters. The first is not an example of a clique but illustrates how a single organization can occupy a central position in a network (similar to how Solidale's largest clique occupied a central position). In this case, the Chamber of Commerce is linked to an array of organizations (12) by its board members. The organizations surrounding the Chamber have few interconnections among themselves (Figure 5.4 illustrates this network sub-graph[43]). Within this sub-graph, there is a high level of network centralization in terms of degree and betweenness. There are nine chamber board members, six of which are interorganizational leaders and create the links. The organizations directly linked to the Chamber represent some of the most active organizations in the community: the Kiwanis are recognized as the most active local civic organization; the hospital is a leading local institution; the school boosters are active; and the Car Club is responsible for Lussville's annual festival (although the festival is really organized by one person under the guise of the Car Club). The racetrack development group and the wellness community are ad hoc groups exploring possible projects. The racetrack has encountered significant problems and will likely not bear fruit for the community. In fact, the group was more a recent memory than an active organization at the time of the field research. The wellness committee was struggling to gain community support during the period of the field research.

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[43] Leadership data was collected for one organization, the Lussville Development Corporation, which is not shown. It was in the process of disbanding at the time of the field research. This not-for profit development group was formed in the 1950s, purchased some land to develop in the 1960s, sold some of the property to a small manufacturer, and expended almost all its reserve capital on infrastructure improvements to the property. Its remaining assets were sold over the next decade to cover the debt and accumulated interest owed on that debt. By the mid-1990s, the organization was formally working to disband.

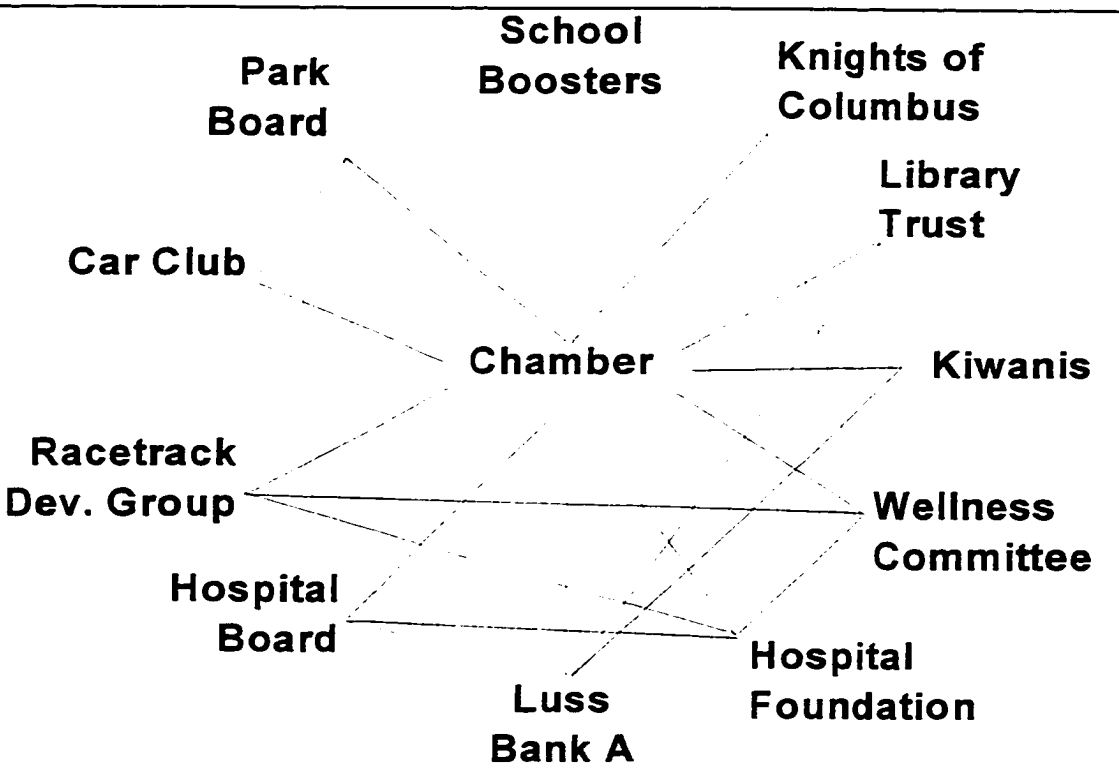


Figure 5.4: Organizations centralized around Lussville's Chamber of Commerce

The central location of the Chamber is the result of Chamber leadership working to build up membership and play a more important role in community development and promotion. Several years prior to this study, the Chamber was involved in a serious community controversy involving litigation against city government. This contentious period of local history led to declining support of the Chamber. Current leadership is working to rebuild the damage to its image and has successfully attracted board members from a variety of other local organizations. The Chamber is emerging as an organization through which information can potentially spread among different community organizations and institutions.

Two notable organizations absent from the cluster of organizations surrounding the Chamber are the City Council and Luss Bank B. These two organizations are part of the largest Lussville Clique, which is shown in Figure 5.5. The seven organizations comprising

this clique are completely interconnected. The Hospital Foundation (which is also linked to the Chamber), a regional social service board, the County Conservation Board, and a city advisory committee exploring the issue of hiring a city administrator are also part of this clique. This clique owes its existence entirely to the leadership positions held by the president of Luss Bank B. There are three redundant connections in the clique due to two other city council members serving on the advisory committee and another City Council member serving on the Country Club board.

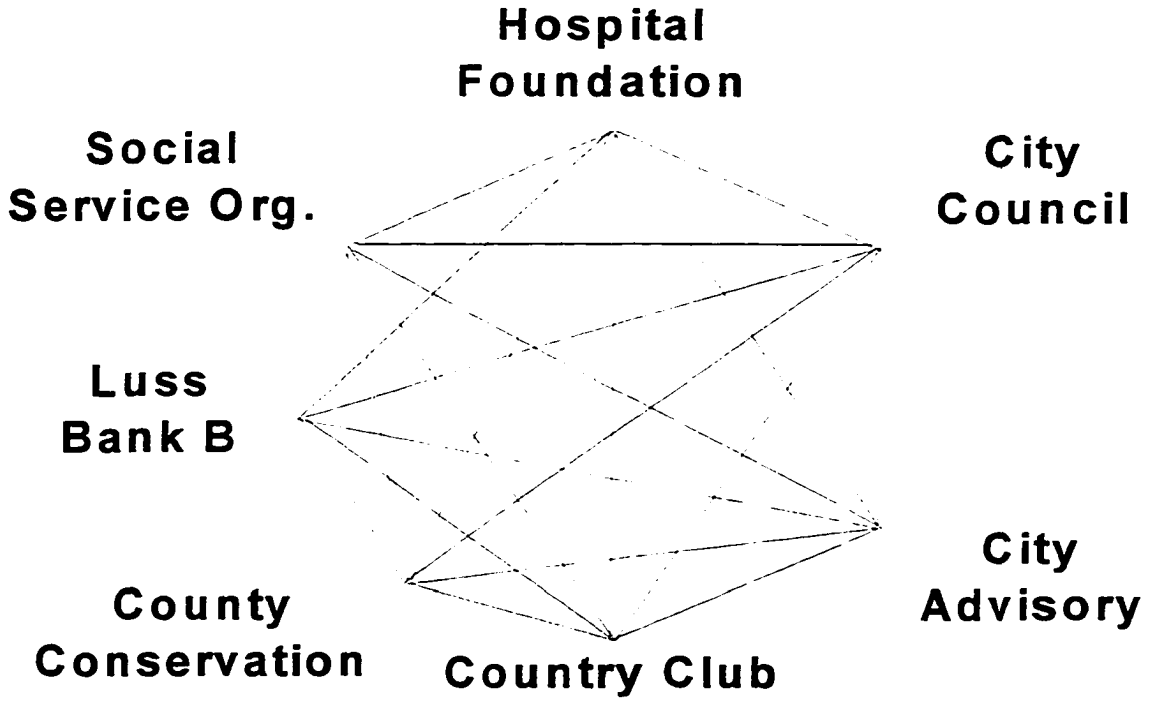


Figure 5.5: Largest Lussville clique, result of multiple leadership of Luss Bank B leader

The structure of interorganizational linkages in Lussville, with two relatively independent sub-graphs (one where the Chamber is central and the other being a dense clique dependent on a single individual), has some similarities to the Solidale sub-graphs, but with important differences. While the Chamber singularly holds a central position in Lussville,

there is a clique of ten organizations that hold the central position in Solidale. Also, where six chamber board members are the interorganizational leaders creating the Chamber links, twenty-three interorganizational leaders hold the core Solidale clique together. Thus there are seven hub organizations linked by single leaders in Lussville versus an average of 2.3 leaders linking each core Solidale organization. Further, while a concentric circle pattern exists around Solidale's core, the two coherent facets of the Lussville network (the Chamber and the largest clique) are almost entirely independent of each other.

Evaluating the social infrastructure characteristics of Lussville, one finds an organizational landscape that is less dense than that found in Solidale, but not as amorphous as what is found in Tryton. The recent development of the Chamber of Commerce as an interactional site linking numerous community social fields together could become a basis for stronger local social infrastructure and lead to the development of a community field. Unlike in Solidale or Tryton where field interviews suggest that the interactional structures have been generally stable, Lussville's current organizational network structure is much more recent in its current form.

Where Solidale's cohesive organizational core encompassing multiple social fields may allow for ready access to significant resources and information, Lussville's organizations and social fields, singularly linked to the Chamber, still may require a negotiated, coalition building process to access and mobilize. The Chamber may provide an interactional setting where consensus and coordination may occur among leading social fields, thus facilitating the coalition building process. But the existence of a significant clique independent of the Chamber structure suggests the possibility that there may be some factions within the community. The history of recent divisive controversy in the community further indicates a factional structure may indeed exist or recently existed. The controversy and the possibility of local factions may require discrete and strategic use of the local social infrastructure to organize the coalitions to support local action.

This organizational analysis illustrates a variety of organizational structures that can exist within a community. Solidale's structure appears to have strengths and weaknesses. There is a core interactional field with significant resources at its disposal—but there are serious concerns about how inclusive the structure is. Tryton's structure is somewhat amorphous. The central organization is one that sends its officers out to serve on other community groups rather than bringing representatives of the community groups together to discuss their interests. The relatively weak organizational density and capacity raise concerns about Tryton's ability to act, even before social infrastructure issues can be considered. Lussville provides an interesting example of a potential community field developing around the Chamber. There is a concern, though, that this emerging coalition and consensus building structure may be challenged by a clique organized around a single leader heavily involved in other community leadership positions. The recent history of factionalism in Lussville increases the need to be wary of a factional rather than coalitional character of the organizational structure. Analysis of leadership structures should add further depth to these initial observations about the community structure.

### Structural Analysis of Interorganizational Leadership

Individual leaders are the links and organizations the nodes in the analysis of the organizational structure. The approach can also be inverted so that organizations are treated as the links and individual leaders are the nodes. In this section, central leaders within the organizational structure of the three case study communities are examined. This is followed with analysis of the interpersonal consultation networks of approximately thirty local leaders and activists in each community. Analysis of these two types of networks, coupled with reputational power data constructed from local informant nominations, will further help determine the inclusiveness and diversity of the community's leadership structure. Greater diversity and inclusiveness is anticipated to be a positive form of social infrastructure

contributing to increased capacity for community action. This leadership analysis will also help to identify generalized leadership, a structure oriented leadership which helps to link social fields, coordination and consensus.

This discussion of leadership also draws on several aspects of the community power literature reviewed in Chapter Two. The discussion is not intended to support either a pluralist or elite perspective, but seeks to explain how particular leadership structures may impede or facilitate action. This leadership analysis should identify whether a pyramidal, factional, coalitional, or amorphous leadership structure (Aiken, 1970) exists in each community (see Figure 2.4 in Chapter Two).

The first step in the analysis of leadership structure follows in the tradition of Perrucci and Pilisuk's study (1970) of interorganizational power, who utilized organizational leadership data to identify interorganizational leaders in a community. Power may accrue to a leader as a result of having direct access to information or resources due to their linkages to other leaders and organizations. The interorganizational leader (IOL) will likely be more knowledgeable about what is going on in the community and strategically positioned to disseminate information through the network or garner support for a project.

Table 5.7 identifies the interorganizational leaders in each community who are linked to at least 30 percent of the other interorganizational leaders through shared membership as an organizational officer or board member. The President of Solid Bank A is connected to 40 percent of the 85 interorganizational leaders in Solidale, a substantial number. Eight other Solidale leaders are linked to thirty percent or more of the other organizational leaders. Six of the eight are members of the Solidale Development Corporation and all eight serve on a core organization other than the Development Corporation. Only four Tryton leaders are linked to at least a third of the 24 other interorganizational leaders in the community. A retired minister's wife has a number of links because of her service on the planning and zoning commission and as a member of two groups associated with Tryton's pre-1960s all

Table 5.7: Leaders linked to 30% of other IOLs

| Individual | # of links | % of all IOLs |
|---|---|---|
| Solidale (N=81 IOLs) | | |
| Bank Pres., Solid Bank B | 32 | 40 |
| Retired Realtor | 30 | 38 |
| Phone Co. Executive | 27 | 34 |
| Newspaper Editor | 26 | 33 |
| Bank Pres., Solid Bank A | 26 | 33 |
| Coop Manager | 26 | 33 |
| Solidale Booster & Business | 25 | 31 |
| Seed entrepreneur | 25 | 31 |
| Judge | 25 | 31 |
| Average Solidale Leader | 11.9 | 14.8 |
| Tryton (N=25 IOLs) | | |
| Retired Minister's Wife | 8 | 33 |
| Bank Officer, Try Bank A | 8 | 33 |
| Newspaper Editor | 8 | 33 |
| Manufacturer Exec. | 8 | 33 |
| Average Tryton Leader | 4.4 | 18 |
| Lussville (N=42 IOLs) | | |
| Branch Bank Officer | 14 | 34 |
| Newspaper Editor | 14 | 35 |
| Chamber Pres. | 13 | 32 |
| Mayor of Lussville | 13 | 32 |
| Average Lussville Leader | 6.7 | 16.3 |

black school. The newspaper editor, a bank officer, and a manufacturing executive are also connected to eight other IOLs. In Lussville, there are four leaders linked to at least thirty percent of the other interorganizational leaders. An officer of a branch bank, the newspaper editor, the Chamber of Commerce executive, and the Lussville Mayor are all linked to eight other IOLs.

Of the leaders identified above, none are women in Solidale, two of the four are women in Tryton, and one of the four is a woman in Lussville. The role of women was broached in the organizational analysis, and this data allows a closer look. Table 5.8

summarizes leadership data broken down by gender in each of the three communities. In the resident survey, respondents were asked whether he/she had served as an officer or leader in the last five years. A much higher proportion of respondents in Solidale (46 percent) reported serving as a local officer, board member, or leader in the past five years than in Tryton (36 percent) or Lussville (35 percent). This is consistent with the data presented thus far, revealing a denser organizational culture in Solidale than in either Tryton or Lussville. Interestingly, an equal proportion of men and women reported holding leadership positions in each of the communities, but an unequal proportion of men and women were found to be IOLs.

Table 5.8: Leadership profiles by gender from resident survey and organizational data

| | Solidale | Tryton | Lussville |
|---|---|---|---|
| Resident Survey Data | | | |
| Served as officer, board member or leader of any organization or group in the past five years (%) | 46.2 | 35.7 | 35.0 |
| By Sex | | | |
| Male (%) | 46.5 | 34.2 | 35.0 |
| Female (%) | 46.1 | 37.0 | 35.1 |
| Organizational Leadership Data | | | |
| # of Interorganizational Leaders | 81 | 25 | 42 |
| Number who are women | 22 | 10 | 12 |
| % that are women | 27.1 | 40.0 | 28.6 |
| 10 IOLs with most connections | | | |
| # who are women | 0 | 5 | 2 |

When looking at the breakdown of interorganizational leaders in each of the communities, men make up a much higher proportion in Solidale and Lussville. In Tryton, forty percent of the IOLs are women, with only 27 to 29 percent of the IOLs in Lussville or Solidale being women. When considering the 10 IOLs most central due to their connections to other IOLs, none are women in Solidale, half are women in Tryton, and two are women in Lussville. The disproportionate number of women IOLs in Solidale continues a trend noted

in the organizational analysis of women's organizations being isolated or on the periphery of Solidale's interorganizational structure. In Tryton, where there are fewer organizations and fewer IOLs, a less stratified pattern exists with women's groups and women almost equally represented in the interorganizational structure. Women appear no more prevalent as IOLs in Lussville than in Solidale, but two women are among the most central in terms of degree in Lussville compared to none in Solidale.

Similar analysis based on income or occupation would be interesting as well, but unfortunately this data was not collected for all IOLs. Of the most central IOLs in all three communities, they are almost exclusively professional and businesspersons.

**Structural Analysis of Personal Consultation Networks and Reputational Power**

Another angle on local power is to examine the interpersonal linkages among local elites and activists. A series of personal interviews were conducted with organizational leaders and activists during the field research. A snowball approach for identifying informants was adopted in each community. Beginning with some of the most visible institutions, such as the Chambers of Commerce, the interviews branched out to include representatives of women's groups, hospital boards, local government, civic organizations, and other public entities. An effort was also made to talk to younger residents who were just becoming involved in the community or, in the case of Tryton, active African Americans in some of the less visible organizations or institutions. Because community development was a primary interest of the larger study, representatives of local business were also interviewed. The interviews were semi-structured and concluded with a standard survey in which personal characteristics, attitudes, and network data were collected (see Appendix B for a copy of the standard leadership instrument administered at the end of all interviews).

Table 5.9 summarizes basic characteristics of local leaders interviewed. There were 39 individuals interviewed in Tryton, thirty individuals in Solidale, and 29 in Lussville[44]. More than 80 percent of the individuals interviewed in each community held or recently had held an organizational leadership position in the community. Interviewed leaders in Solidale were more likely to belong to organizations outside the community (83 percent), than leaders or activists interviewed in Tryton (50 percent) and Lussville (61 percent).[45] These outside organizations ranged from professional organizations to state sportsman's clubs. The average age of those interviewed was approximately fifty in all three communities. Many of the younger informants (less than 30) in all three communities were actively sought after to get some perspectives of the younger generation. Educational attainment of informants interviewed was highest in Solidale, and lowest in Tryton—consistent with the demographic characteristics of the community. Five of the 39 individuals interviewed in Tryton were African-American, proportional to the African-American population in the community.

Fewer women were interviewed in Solidale than in Tryton and Lussville, a result of leading community institutions and local business and industry disproportionately led by men. In Tryton and Lussville, more women occupied prominent leadership positions. The under-representation of female informants in Solidale is a weakness of the data, and illustrates a bias of the methodology toward economic elites and reputationally prominent institutions, although the same methodology in Tryton and Lussville resulted in interviews of twice as many women (13 of the 39 interviews in Tryton were with women, only five of thirty interviews were of women in Solidale).

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[44]More interviews were conducted in Tryton since it was the first study site and the research team spent more days in the community fine-tuning the data collection procedures. In addition to the 98 individuals formally interviewed in all three communities, there were about four or five less intensive interviews in each community where a personal survey was not administered. These latter interviews were intended to learn about a specific aspect of the community.

[45] Outside organizational involvement of the local leaders interviewed in each community was approximately double the level of outside involvement of the average resident. In Solidale, 40 percent of the residents reported belonging to an outside organization. In Tryton only 25 percent belonged to outside organizations and in Lussville the figure was 33 percent.

Table 5.9: Characteristics of residents who were interviewed

| | Solidale (N=30) | Tryton (N=39) | Lussville (N=29) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Organizational/Govt. Leadership (%) | | | |
| Belong to Local Org. | 93.3 | 94.6 | 89.3 |
| Belong to Outside Org. | 83.3 | 50.0 | 60.7 |
| Org. Leadership Position | 90.0 | 89.5 | 82.1 |
| Public Office/Served on Public Bd. | 53.3 | 39.5 | 42.9 |
| Age (%) | | | |
| Less than 40 | 23.2 | 17.0 | 20.7 |
| 40 to 59 | 50.0 | 60.0 | 55.1 |
| 60 and over | 26.6 | 22.8 | 24.0 |
| Mean | 50.1 | 50.5 | 48.7 |
| Sex (%) | | | |
| Male | 83.3 | 66.7 | 72.4 |
| Female | 16.7 | 33.3 | 27.6 |
| Ethnicity/Race (%) | | | |
| White/European | 100.0 | 87.2 | 96.6 |
| African American | -- | 12.8 | -- |
| Native American | -- | -- | 3.4 |
| Educational Attainment (%) | | | |
| High School or less | 13.3 | 34.4 | 20.6 |
| Some College, 2 year or no degree | 23.3 | 34.4 | 31.0 |
| Bachelors degree or higher | 63.3 | 31.2 | 48.3 |

During the field interviews, respondents were asked "What is the name of the person you most commonly discuss community issues with?" The name was recorded and followed with the question, "Who else do you discuss important community issues with?" Respondents were allowed to identify up to six individuals. From this information it was possible to construct a personal consultation network with nodes being persons and links created by a consultation relationship. In Lussville, the consultation network matches some of organizational linkages among IOLs. In Solidale, the pattern matches the

interorganizational leadership structure. In Tryton, a consultation pattern with limited similarity to either the organizational or interorganizational leadership structures exists.

**Solidale Consultation and Reputational Data**

In Solidale, 28 individuals provided the names of between one and six individuals who were consulted. The relationship was assumed to be symmetric as not all network nominees were interviewed to confirm asymmetry. Fifty five unique individuals (including the 28 original respondents) were nominated. The data was analyzed to identify central individuals and cliques. The most central individual in the Solidale consultation clique was Ben Sumner, a local businessman in his 70s and widely recognized as one of the most tireless community boosters. He either consulted or was consulted by thirty percent (16) of network members. Figure 5.6 identifies Mr. Sumner as the "Community Booster" in the center of the figure and the various individuals who consult with him. Mr. Sumner's central position is due to a number factors. He has been involved in community development activities for over thirty years, and while his actions have not made him the most popular person in town (one person said of him, "he probably couldn't get elected dogcatcher of Solidale"), he is respected as a great community promoter. He also has held numerous positions in statewide organizations[46] and has a well developed network of contacts throughout the state. These extra-local linkages have been of assistance to the community over the years—useful for identifying extra-local resources and useful for maneuvering through the political process to access some of these resources.

The people Mr. Sumner consults or who consult with him include many of the leading institutional leaders in the community, such as the presidents of both banks, the CEO and another executive of the locally owned telephone company, a county supervisor, a city council person, and several other civic and business leaders. These relationships have

[46] Including the State Chamber of Commerce organization and a major political party.

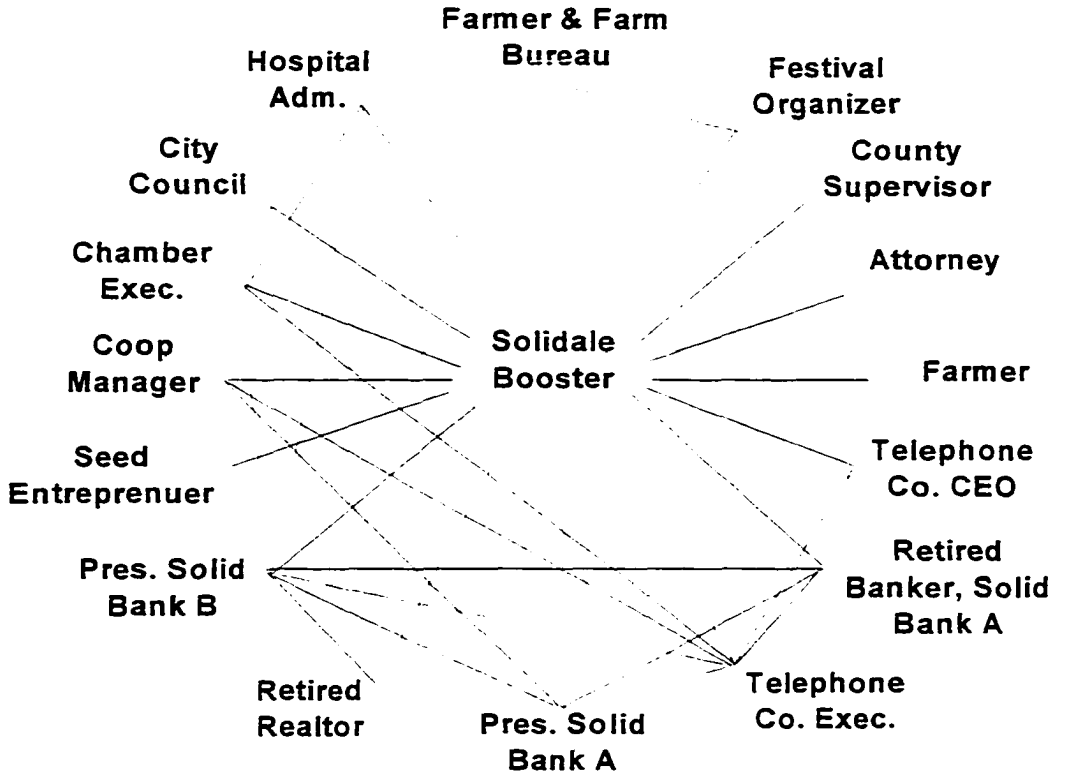


Figure 5.6: Solidale Consultation Network with Most Central Individual

enabled Mr. Sumner to build bridges and facilitate the flow of information within the community. Sumner exemplifies what Wilkinson (1970, 1991) calls a generalized leader sensitive to the importance of creating structural links among different interest fields in the community. Sumner's position in the community has a strategic structural character, as he has consciously developed local as well as extra-local linkages.

There are potential negative consequences of this structural role. Sumner was identified by a third of the local informants as an effective project stopper, although no stopped projects were identified during the field research. Some of Sumner's capacity to stop projects may be an ability to prevent projects from developing beyond the idea stage of one or a couple local residents. His ability to not use his networks to generate awareness is as much a source of power as the ability to generate awareness.

The reputation for stopping a project was drawn from a larger series of questions concerning reputational power. Respondents were asked to name who he/she considered was a community leader. Four different questions were asked:[47]

- Local leader to the outside: "Who would you say are the individuals most effective in representing the community of [community name] to the outside?"
- Leader needed for a successful project: "If a project which was important to you were before the community, who are the five people whose support would be most needed for the project to succeed?'
- Effective project implementer: "Name the four people most effective in implementing projects."
- Effective project stopper: "Name the three people most effective in stopping projects."

Mr. Sumner was recognized as a powerful local leader in several ways (Table 5.10): good at representing Solidale to the outside; necessary for a successful project; an effective project implementer; and recognized by some residents as an effective project stopper (33 percent of those interviewed identified him as effective at stopping projects). Both the leaders most central in the IOL network (President of Solid Bank B) and the consultation network (Mr. Sumner) were recognized as reputational leaders in the community. Two other reputational leaders are the telecommunications company executive and, to a lesser extent, the telecommunications company CEO.

The telecommunications company executive, Rick Sorenson, was consistently recognized along with Mr. Sumner as a leader to the outside and necessary for a project to succeed. He also was the leader most commonly identified as effective at implementing a project. The source of some of his power is as an IOL and a central consultation leader. He has the third highest degree centrality in the interorganizational leader network (linked to 34

[47] Somewhat modified from Trounstine and Christensen's (1982) community power research.

Table 5.10: Solidale reputational power nominations (reports from 30 residents)

| Represent to the Outside | | Needed for a project to succeed | | Effective project implementers | | Effective project stoppers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Individual | N | Individual | N | Individual | N | Individual | N |
| Sumner | 27 | Sumner | 24 | Phone Co. Exec. | 20 | Sumner | 10 |
| Phone Co. Exec. | 25 | Phone Co. Exec | 21 | Sumner | 19 | Mayor | 3 |
| Phone Co. CEO | 10 | Pres Solid Bank B | 16 | Pres Solid Bank B | 12 | | |
| Pres Solid Bank B | 8 | Phone Co. CEO | 11 | Phone Co. CEO | 11 | | |

percent of all IOLs) and is the second most linked individual in the consultation network. He also has a close relationship with Mr. Sumner. Several informants characterized Sumner and Sorenson's relationship as a mentoring one. Sumner, in his 70s, has encouraged Sorenson, in his 40s, to become active in several statewide associations and has collaborated with him many community projects. Several informants indicated the community has a Mr. Solidale (Sumner) who is slowly being replaced by a younger Mr. Solidale (Sorenson), a transition that even Sorenson recognizes as perhaps a conscious plan of Sumner's. The transition also illustrates a process of structure building where one generalized leader mentors another potential generalized leader.

Sorenson's rise to prominence began over a decade ago when he and some fellow neighbors actively opposed a proposed development project near their homes. The opposition brought Sorenson to the attention of the community leaders he opposed, and the leaders soon found a way of getting Sorenson involved in other community activities. The pattern of identifying younger leaders, then integrating and mentoring them through the leadership structure appears to be a successful and ongoing process in Solidale. This can be viewed as an example of structural integration to help build a consensus. The process has even become more formal with the recent development of a leadership program designed by Sorenson and other community leaders in collaboration with the local extension agent. Three cohorts of approximately fifteen potential leaders have gone through the program as of 1996. Solidale's largest consultation clique reflects the successful integration of two generations of

central leaders in the community (Figure 5.7) and the formal leadership program appears to be preparing for future transitions.

The largest consultation clique contains all of the central organizational and consultation leaders as well as the top reputational leaders. This elite group has significant influence on determining what community activities will or will not be pursued. In the figure, Sumner is identified as the "Solidale Booster and Businessman" and Sorenson as the "Telephone Co. Exec". There is one women in the clique, the longtime executive director of the Chamber of Commerce who also assists with some of the activities of the Solidale Development Corporation. Three of the seven leaders identified are part of an older generation (60+ years): the retired president of Solid Bank A, the Chamber director, and Sumner have all been long-time leaders. The two current bank presidents, the coop manager, and Sorensen are all leaders in their forties or early fifties.

There are strengths and weaknesses to this leadership structure. An obvious concern with such a tightly linked elite is inclusiveness. The existence of a power elite continues the

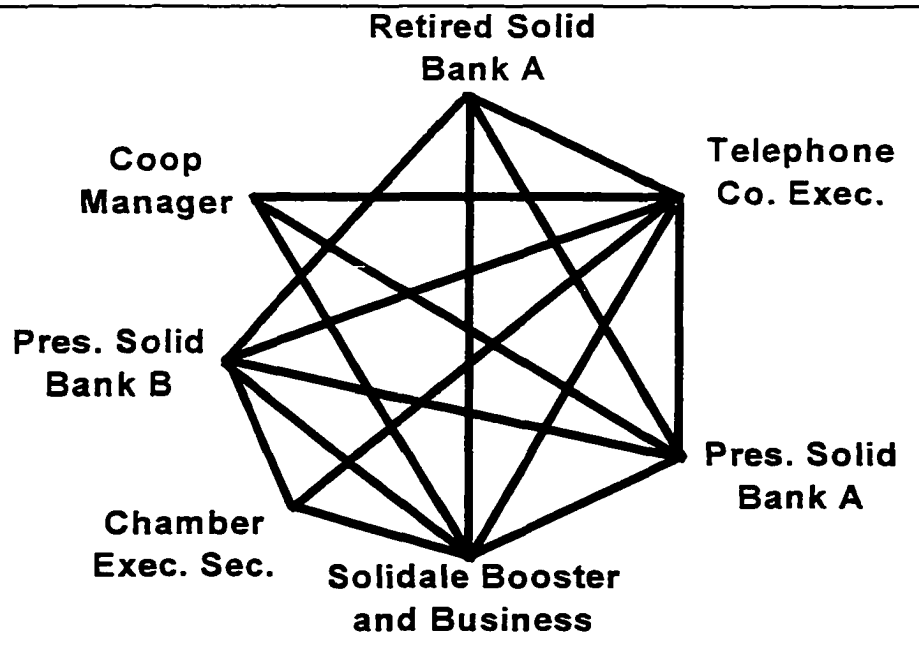


Figure 5.7: Largest consultation K-Plex in Solidale; consults at least 3 others

concern from the organizational network analysis about how open and inclusive the male-dominated organizational structure is. Although findings from the community power debates are mixed as to what the implications of such a power structure might be, Solidale's core appears to have some resemblance to the power structure identified by Perrucci and Pilisuk (1970) in their study of a small Midwestern city. They conclude that the elite group in there case study city may not be involved in all local action, but have access to resources "necessary to assure an outcome favorable to its interests" (p. 1056). Aiken (1970) in his review of community power structures suggests that one possible outcome of a pyramidal power structure (single cohesive leadership structure) is a greater ability to coordinate and achieve resource mobilization for action, although a more conflict oriented position might argue that mobilization will be highly conditioned by elite interests (Logan and Molotch, 1987).

There are two possible strengths of the Solidale leadership structure. First, the existence of generalized leadership with multiple connections across social fields is capable of generating local awareness of a concern or project. This leadership may also be able to create links among those identifying problems and those capable of solving problems, which Reich (1991) identifies as strategic brokers (a vital role in an information society). A second strength is the conscious, even formal, structural integration of new leaders into the network. For example, one young woman interviewed had participated in the leadership development program and now served as chair of the Chamber/Development Corporation's tourism sub-committee. Of course these strengths become irrelevant if the structure is utilized to advance selfish rather than community ends. The character of Solidale's structure appears to have a strong commitment to the general community interest as evidenced by some of the projects advanced (although there are benefits to banks, businesses, and the telephone company of a livable community attractive to new residents).

**Tryton Consultation and Reputational Leadership Data**

The consultation pattern in Tryton is much different from that found in Solidale. In Tryton, the central consultation leaders were not central interorganizational leaders. Thirty-two informants in Tryton identified fifty unique individuals who were consulted about community affairs. Most central, in terms of direct connections, was the city administrator. Unlike in Solidale, where no city employee or elected official held a central position in any of the networks, the city administrator emerged at the center of one consultation grouping (Figure 5.8). Interestingly, when clique and visual analysis was conducted to identify notable cliques, a network with two hubs was identified. The first hub, organized around the city administrator, included a clique of moderately interlocked leaders (the president of the Development Authority,[48] an officer of the Try Bank B who is also a member of the Development Authority, the mayor, a council member, and the city administrator).

The other hub of the consultation network is organized around the President of Try Bank A. A leader of the local fair, the Chamber President, the school superintendent, a realtor, and a city council member are some of the persons with a consultation relation with Shelly Randall, a banker and long-time community activist. Recall that Try Bank A was identified as the most central organization in Tryton in terms of betweenness and degree, which may elevate Randall's status as someone in the know because her officers and board members are active in six other community organizations.

The relationship between the two hubs is not conflictual, although there is some history of tension between some of the *individuals* surrounding the two hubs. For example, the Chamber President formerly held a paid position as economic developer for the city but was let go after the successful recruitment of a state prison. This resulted in tension between some local activists and the city manager.

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[48] The development authority is a local government board with the capacity to generate revenue bonds if necessary. The Development Authority has led several local community development efforts (largely industrial recruitment efforts).

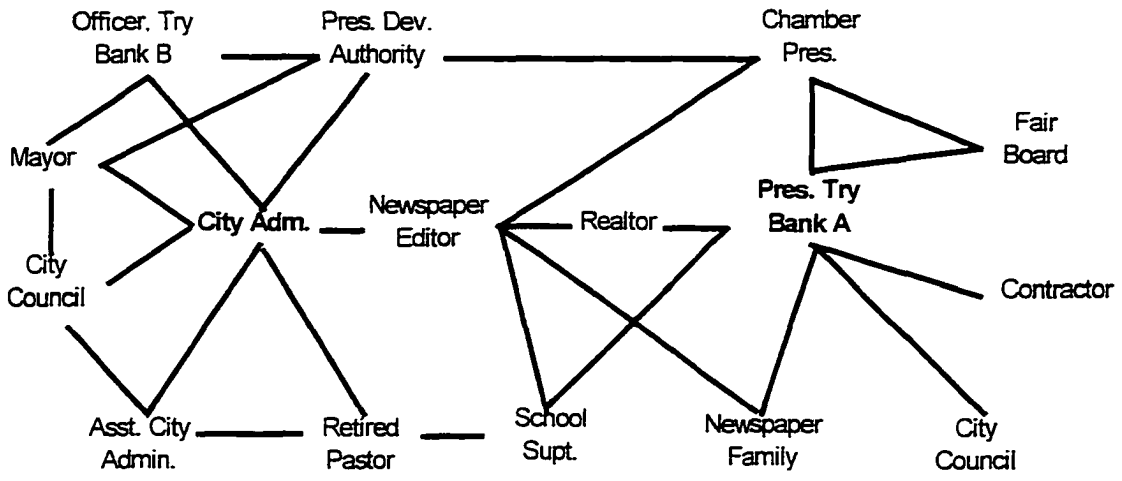


Figure 5.8: Tryton consultation network with two primary hubs

The only leader in the consultation diagram who was central in the organizational network is the newspaper editor, revealing that IOL may not be a sure source of power in the community. This is consistent with the early conjecture that the organizational structure is sparse and lacking vitality.

The reputational leadership data adds even another layer to the picture with some additional leaders emerging as important in community affairs (Table 5.11). The current Chamber president who was also the former community economic developer was identified by over 60 percent of the local informants as a good representative of Tryton to the outside. There was less consensus concerning which leaders were key to the success of a community project or an effective project implementer. Several different leaders were nominated by one-third to one-half of the informants (compared to the top two leaders in Solidale receiving nominations from seventy to ninety percent of the informants). The Chamber president, the president of Try Bank A, and an officer with Try Bank B were most consistently identified as leaders. The Development Authority president and the newspaper editor were also identified as reputational leader in one or the other category. A longtime realtor, well known as a main street curmudgeon and nay-sayer, received the most nominations as a stopper. The realtor's

Table 5.11: Tryton reputational power nominations (reports from 35 residents)

| Represent to the Outside | | Needed for a project to succeed | | Effective project implementers | | Effective project stoppers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Individual | N | Individual | N | Individual | N | Individual | N |
| Chamber Pres. | 20 | Officer, Bank B | 16 | Chamber Pres. | 13 | Realtor | 10 |
| City Admin. | 14 | Dev. Auth. Pres. | 13 | Pres. Bank A | 11 | Mayor | 5 |
| Officer, Bank B | 8 | Pres. Bank A | 12 | Officer, Bank B | 11 | Dev. Auth. Pres. | 4 |
| Pres., Bank A | 7 | Chamber Pres. | 12 | Newspaper Editor | 8 | | |

power to stop is not due to institutional power but appears to be more a result of his occasional vocal and antagonistic opposition to persons or projects that he does not like.[49]

The community literature does not contain many good examples for anticipating the implications of Tryton's amorphous leadership structure, where a variety of relatively independent leaders are central or have reputational power. The consultation structure suggests the possibility of two factions, although the field research does not corroborate this assessment. The city manager, who was the source of some friction, left the community toward the end of the field research and removes one impetus for factions developing.[50] The structure is not consistent with some of the IOL literature suggesting that interorganizational leadership is an important source of community power (Knoke, 1990; Perrucci and Pilisuk, 1970) The structure may lend itself to individual leaders forging coalitions, which the examples of community action later in this chapter may help confirm. The lack of an organizational nexus for a community field, limited interorganizational leaders, and a two-hub consultation network may impede the interaction and communication necessary to successfully organize coalitions in the community, though.

**Lussville Consultation and Reputational Leadership Data**

The consultation network found in Lussville is more similar to Solidale's structure than Tryton's structure. Consultation data was collected from only 22 Tryton residents. In

[49] The realtor is infamous for including mini-essays, sometimes rather critical of community activities, in his realty listings in the local newspaper

[50] The city manager's departure does put a void in the consultation network, although during the last field visit the assistant city manager may have successfully replaced the former city manager's consultation role.

general, Tryton residents were more guarded than informants in the other communities and a number of respondents refused to provide consultation data. Still, the pattern that emerges from the 22 informants who nominated 47 unique individuals reveals one individual particularly central within the consultation network and the existence of one sizable clique.

Figure 5.9 identifies the central position of the Lussville Chamber president, John Hopewell. Hopewell was linked to twelve individuals in the consultation network, many of whom are associated with leading community institutions—the network includes both bank presidents and the chief officer of the branch bank, the hospital administrator, several city employees, and a number of prominent business persons. Hopewell's centrality is a relatively recent development (within the last five years)[51] and he has worked to rebuild the Chamber of Commerce following a contentious period when the Chamber sued the City of Lussville. The centrality of the Chamber within the organizational network and Hopewell's centrality as a person to consult about community affairs may be viewed as the structural development of a community field and the emergence of a generalized leader. This structure building has been mostly the work of Hopewell.

One large consultation clique does exist in Lussville. The six leaders identified on the right half of Figure 5.9 maintain 80 percent of the possible consultation relationships possible. Interestingly, these six individuals are the interorganizational leaders that link all but two of the organizations in the Lussville organization networks identified in Figures 5.4 and 5.5. The consultation clique includes the Luss Bank B president, who links all the organizations in Figure 5.5 through his multiple leadership positions. The other five individuals in the consultation clique are the IOLs who create the linkages to the Chamber in Figure 5.4. The mayor, identified as a somewhat central interorganizational leader in Table

[51] Hopewell was not born or raised in the community and has lived in the community for only 15 years. He moved to Lussville after he graduated from college.

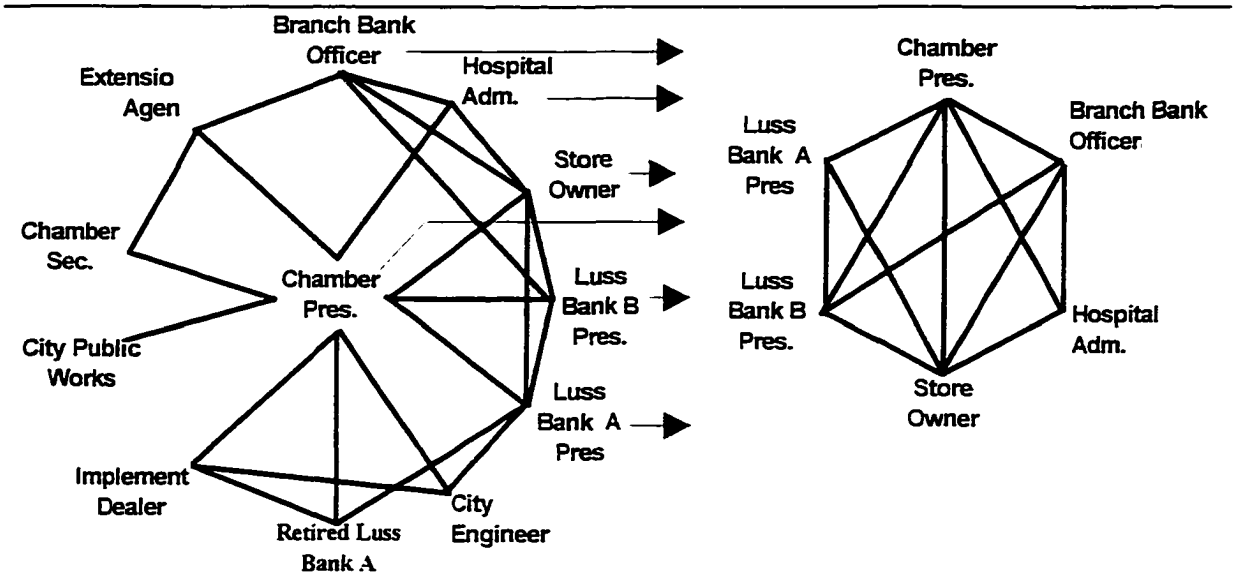


Figure 5.9: Lussville consultation network, star and largest clique

whom he consults with limited his exposure in the network, although he was not identified by any of the six members of the largest consultation clique.

The existence of the Luss Bank B President in the consultation clique allays some concern that the earlier identified organizational structures (the Chamber hub and the organizational clique created by the Luss Bank B president) might represent possible factions. The fact that communication occurs among the leaders suggests that the relationship may be amicable and lend itself to coalition building, although there still could be competition among the potential coalition members.

Field observation and interviews corroborate Hopewell's centrality. He was identified by almost all informants in the course of the snowball sampling as someone to talk to about community affairs. He was also identified as a reputational leader (Table 5.12). Hopewell and the president of Luss Bank B were the most commonly identified reputational leaders, although many informants had more difficulty identifying leaders who represent the community to the outside or were effective project implementers than in either of the other two communities. One central leader, in response to the question asking him to name an

effective project implementer, stated "that's a problem in our community." Two effective project stoppers who were not central as either interorganizational leaders or for consultation are two members of the city council. According to some informants, both project stoppers are nay-sayers who use their positions on the city council to stop projects or advance petty causes. Not all city council members had this reputation, for example the president of Luss Bank B is a city council member and was identified as a leader needed for a project to succeed. Neither of the city council persons receiving nominations as project stoppers received a single nomination in any of the other reputational power categories.

Table 5.12: Lussville reputational power nominations (reports from 27 residents)

| Represent to the Outside | | Needed for a project to succeed | | Effective project implementers | | Effective project stoppers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Individual | N | Individual | N | Individual | N | Individual | N |
| Chamber Pres. | 14 | Luss Bank B Pres. | 20 | Chamber Pres. | 15 | City Council A | 10 |
| Luss Bank B Pres. | 10 | Chamber Pres. | 18 | Luss Bank B Pres. | 12 | City Council B | 7 |
| | | Luss Bank A Pres. | 8 | | | | |

Despite some similarities between Lussville's and Solidale's leadership structures, there are a couple of notable differences. First, the integration of two generations in the Solidale networks does not exist in Lussville. While an older and middle-aged generation appear to overlap and share central and reputational power in Solidale, Lussville's leadership is dominated by a middle-aged or younger group. A history of community conflict and frustration appears to have turned some of the older leaders off and a steady progression of retirees moving out of the community explain some of the older generation's absence. The second difference is the relative recent emergence of the Chamber and Hopewell in the Lussville structure compared to the long history of Solidale's Development Corporation and its central leaders. The younger generation in Lussville appears intent on building new bridges and developing a community capable of working together, although the resident survey analysis suggests the general public needs a lot more convincing. The mean response

of Lussville residents to the question concerning a belief that the community acts was slightly negative. The multivariate analysis also uncovered a significant negative effect of the Lussville dummy code.

Lussville's overall leadership may be in transition and might be located somewhere between coalitional and factional and precipitously close to amorphous if Hopewell should retire from his efforts or leave. The conflicts from a few years ago may have subsided, but the existence of two project stoppers on the city council may represent a potential source of friction and community factions. The coalitional possibilities may increase due to greater community awareness across social fields due to the linkages found in the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber has also begun to sponsor coffees on a regular basis to encourage interaction among local residents and business owners—another step that may lead to coalitional possibilities.

Lussville's emergent structure has possibilities for better coordinating action and the generalized leadership of Hopewell could facilitate the flow of information within the community. The downside of a structure that allows for the development of coalitions is the possibility that coalitions can develop into factions working in opposition to each other. The most recent controversy pitted the Chamber against the City Council with the following results: several City Council members and a Mayor were voted out of office, the Chamber lost significant membership, and several older leaders completely have withdrawn from community affairs. Hopewell's efforts may be repairing some of the damage, or at least moving the community beyond this contentious episode.

### Conclusions About Organizational and Leadership Network Analysis

Several conclusions or inferences can be developed from the discussion of interorganizational networks, interorganizational leaders networks, and leader consultation networks. The following sections outline some of the key conclusions of the analysis

presented in this chapter and discusses how these findings relate to the hypothesis concerning the existence of social infrastructure and a greater capacity for community action.

**Network Analysis Findings**

Each of the three communities was found to have varying levels of organizational capacity and different structures of interlocking directorates. The numerous Solidale organizations surrounding a tightly interlocked group of core organizations with significant resources likely contributes to a capacity to coordinate and direct resources for various community action projects. Despite concerns about how representative the core is of the interests of women and women-led organizations, the linkages among the core organizations may approximate a community field with a number of important social fields represented. Tryton has a less vital organizational culture and a sparse structure of interlocking directorates, there is some concern that the sparseness of the local structure may inhibit coordination and full resource mobilization for community development activities. The amorphous structure appears to be inclusive, although the modest organizational capacity and the apparent absence of an organizational interactional field that might approximate a community field indicate relatively low, although not exclusive, social infrastructure. Lussville's structure falls somewhere between the long-standing and highly coordinated structure found in Solidale and the amorphous structure in Tryton. The recent emergence of the Chamber of Commerce as a site where leaders from several leading social fields are linked may contribute to a community field, although a legacy of factionalism and 5.7, is not to be found in the consultation networks described above. His refusal to identify controversy may linger within the community. The nascent social infrastructure may be useful to future local action efforts if it persists.

The character of interorganizational leaders also varied among the three communities. Within all three communities, men and women equally reported holding leadership positions

in local community organizations. Only in Tryton were women nearly equally represented as interorganizational leaders (IOLs). In Tryton, approximately 40 percent of all the IOLs were women while only 27 percent were in Solidale and 28 percent in Lussville. The 10 leaders most central in terms of direct connections to other IOLs in Solidale were all men while eight were men in Lussville and half of the 10 most central were women in Tryton. Thus, the concern about the inclusiveness of Solidale's social infrastructure is furthered revealed with a disproportionate number men holding strategic interorganizational leadership positions in the community. The equal representation of men and women as IOLs in Tryton suggests a more inclusive organizational culture than either of the other two communities.

The structural analysis of personal consultation networks further revealed notable differences among the communities. Of particular interest is the existence of reputationally powerful cliques of leaders in Solidale and Lussville. Also in both communities one or more leaders were identified who held strategically important positions between many different leaders representing a variety of different interest fields. These centrally located leaders may allow for generalized leadership capable of creating bridges and developing structure which can facilitate community action. Field observations suggest that in Solidale the central consultation leaders are active structure builders helping to develop future leaders and build consensus. In Lussville the generalized leadership is more recent and must work to overcome hostility and factionalism lingering from recent controversies. The downside of such central leaders, though, is the potential for such an elite to encourage certain types of action and discourage or prevent other types.

A two node consultation network was identified in Tryton which raises concerns about factionalism or may indicate a coalitional leadership structure. The likely assessment drawn from the field research is that this consultation structure is generally not organized around any particular interests or reflective of local factions (although there has been some conflict surrounding the city government). Reputational power in Tryton was dispersed

among a variety of individuals who were not closely linked like the power elites of Lussville and Solidale. The structure of leadership in Tryton suggests that it is necessary for individual leaders to forge coalitions without the aid of significant generalized leadership or a community field.

**Conclusions from Network Analysis**

Solidale clearly has an organizational and leadership structure that can enable the mobilization of numerous organizations, individuals and resources for community action. There is concern, though, that the highly coordinated structure may exclude some important local interests. In Lussville, important linkages among various social fields and leaders of these fields may be developing although the ability of these structures to persist remains to be seen. The recent existence of local factions and antagonistic controversy uncovered during the field work suggest the community has had demonstrable problems achieving consensus and working together. Social infrastructure is more fragile and emerging in Lussville and has limited ability to facilitate community action. The amorphous structure in Tryton, the apparent absence of a community field or notable generalized leadership, and the dispersal of centrality or reputational power among a variety of leaders reveal an inclusive structure which may have limited capacity to mobilize significant resources or develop a community-wide consensus with its network structure. Social infrastructure is relatively undeveloped, although the preconditions of inclusiveness and tolerance appear to exist.

These assessments are generally consistent with the empirical findings where living in Tryton or Lussville was found to have direct negative effects on the belief that the community can act in contrast to residence in Solidale. The Tryton dummy code's effect on belief that the community acts was less than the Lussville dummy code, which may reflect the difference between a legacy of an antagonistic/factional structure and a relatively amorphous, but open, structure.

In relation to the second hypothesis, the expectation is that community action in Solidale is enhanced by local social infrastructure, although the actions assisted may be limited to the preferences of the local elites. One might expect modest benefits of the emerging Lussville structure, although the legacy of controversy may limit these benefits. In Tryton, local social infrastructure is limited, although generally inclusive. The problem in Tryton is not one of exclusivity, but rather of coordination and communication across various interest fields to achieve a community oriented interest necessary for community action.

Table 5.13 summarizes the key fidings of this chapter.

Table 5.13: Summary of Chapter 5 network analysis

| Analysis | Conclusion |
|---|---|
| Network Analysis<br>Findings | Solidale: A dense clique of organizations at the core of the community's organizational structure. Capacity to coordinate and mobilize significant resources, although some concern about inclusiveness. A clique of elite leaders (all male) raises further concerns about inclusiveness. The potential for generalized leadership may aid in developing links and a community-wide interest among local leaders across various social fields.<br>Tryton: An amorphous organizational structure with leadership held by men and women. Leadership is generally not associated with holding an IOL position and there is no apparent elite leader clique. The community may be limited by the lack of generalized leadership oriented toward creating linkages and building consensus among the various social fields.<br>Lussville: A potential social infrastructure may be developing with the recent emergence of a number of social fields linked around the Chamber of Commerce and the existence of the current Chamber president as an important consultation hub in the community. Local action may be hindered, though, by recent controversies and historic factionalism in the community. |
| Hypotheses | The network structures identified suggest that social infrastructure may have implications for community action. The apparent existence of a community field and generalized leadership in Solidale is expected to be of greatest use for community action, while social infrastructure appears less developed and useful in Tryton and Lussville. |
| General Conclusions | The organizational and leadership structures are believed to approximate social infrastructure and are expected to be related to the capacity for community action (tested in Chapter 6). The existence or absence of a community field and generalized leadership are identified by the analysis. The network analysis is consistent with the multivariate findings, and illuminates some of the structural characteristics which contribute to residence in Lussville and Tryton having significant, negative effects on the belief that the community acts. |

# CHAPTER 6. COMMUNITY ACTION ANALYSIS

In this section, the implications of the organizational and leadership structures are illuminated by profiles of recent community action processes in each of the three communities. The local action projects will help determine if there is merit to the hypothesis that community social infrastructure is related to the capacity for community action.

Brief narratives of several recent projects in each community will be discussed and the role and significance of local structures will be highlighted. Project data for this analysis was elicited from project informants who reviewed rosters of local governmental units, local institutions, civic organizations, businesses and industry to identify whether an organization provided monetary, information/technical, or moral support to the project. Project informants were also asked to identify individuals instrumental in initiating or implementing the project. Data for three different types of projects were collected in each community: an economic development project, a community improvement project, and a community festival. The recent economic development project was an action to purposefully increase economic activity, create jobs, or generate additional income. In the case of Tryton and Solidale, where there had been more than one such project in the last three years, the most recent activity was selected. Information about a community improvement project was collected, which was a project oriented toward improving some facet of the local quality of life, such as improving a service or enhancing some other possible use-value (Logan and Molotch, 1987). Information was also collected about each community's local festival, although the festival data will not be elaborated in the following sections.[52]

[52] The structural patterns of the festivals are consistent with aspects of the other two projects reported from each community.

All of the projects identified had a moderate to high level of community orientation. Some of the projects engaged a larger number of residents or local organizations than others, but all of the projects have had an impact on some aspect of the local society.

**Action in Solidale**

The two projects profiled in Solidale are an ethanol plant start-up associated with the Solidale Coop and a housing development project associated with the Solidale Development Corporation. The housing project has been in existence for about five or six years and has been an extremely successful, on-going activity. The ethanol start-up is a recent project and its long-term success has yet to be determined, especially since there has been significant grain market volatility in recent years.

Solidale's ethanol project is an example of how the dense organizational core can be tapped and the support of the local power elite can be utilized to facilitate a project. The project was initiated by the Solidale Farmer Co-op and its local manager. A number of state and federal subsidies made the venture attractive. To raise $20 million equity capital for the $40 million, 25 million gallon capacity plant, a limited liability corporation was created among three partners: a regional energy company, a national agriculture co-op, and a newly constituted closed member Farmer Cooperative. The Solidale coop manager coordinated a regional effort which raised $5.7 million from 215 area farmers and 15 area co-ops. The national agriculture co-op invested a couple million and the remaining balance was invested by the regional energy company. Farmers in the new co-op committed to a minimum initial investment of 5,000 bushels of corn at $2.50 a bushel ($12,500). The farmer cooperative serves as a shell, receiving its share of the profit from the limited liability corporation and distributing the profit to the farmers in the form of patronage dividends. As an obligation of membership, farmer members are obligated to sell a certain minimum number of bushels each year to the cooperative.

While the project did not require an outpouring of local resident support, a number of actions by local government and community organizations made the activity possible. Land for the plant was made available by the Solidale Development Corporation. Extending water to the plant was paid for cooperatively by the City of Solidale, the ethanol plant and the Development Corporation. Paving of the access road to the plant was paid for by county government. A favorable agreement was achieved between the City of Solidale and the ethanol plant for making necessary upgrades to Solidale's sewer treatment facility. Perhaps one of the more interesting types of support was provided by the local Chamber, which utilized promotional funds to charter two planes to transport area farmers to an ethanol facility in a neighboring state to generate additional farmer support of the farmer cooperative. The local newspaper provided extensive coverage of the trip as a further promotion.

Although local civic organizations were not engaged in the project and there was no out-pouring of resident support of the project, there also was no opposition to the activities necessary for the project to succeed. As the co-op manager and project leader explained, "had it not been for a very positive community that I know would support the project, I probably wouldn't have tried any of this." The necessary support was generated within the organizational core and the two generalized community leaders, Sumner and Sorenson, were instrumental. According to the co-op manager, Sorenson "put the glue together in the community between the city, the county and [the ethanol plant]."

The ethanol project benefited from the capacity of local leadership and the organizational structure to quickly achieve a consensus among the elites and build support for the project. The co-op manager had access to the central individuals and core organizations through his involvement in several core organizations and as a member of the densest consultation clique. Acquisition of local governmental support was not problematic with the support of the key elites. Resources necessary for final promotion of the project were easily

acquired from the Chamber of Commerce and the newspaper (whose editor is a member of the Development Corporation's advisory board) provided favorable coverage.

The project also illustrates the importance of extra-local ties and the capacity to access these extra-local resources. Funding for the limited liability corporation coupled with the state and federal subsidies were important resources that made project start-up viable. In Table 5.9 it was reported that the key informants in Solidale were much more likely to belong to outside organizations. In the case of this project, some of the outside connections of the co-op manager were important for the project's success.

The second Solidale project is a housing development project. A housing committee associated with the Solidale Development Corporation was formed in 1988. Research by the Development Corporation revealed that houses in the $50,000 range were not being built in the community. Low profit margins of builders, an appraising gap where houses were being appraised below their actual cost of construction, and the speculative nature of this untapped market niche contributed to inadequate affordable housing. The housing committee successfully applied for a $125,000 state economic development grant to help bridge the appraising gap and subsidize financing of purchases by low income residents. A non-profit corporation was formed by a group of local businessmen contributing $75,000 to a non-interest bearing 10 year note, $100,000 was donated by one of the local trusts to provide equity capital, and a $300,000 line of credit was received from the two local banks. There were also a number of vacant or run-down lots which were donated by the local co-op and an out of town bank.

The first house was built in 1991 and, by Spring of 1997, 34 houses had been built and 31 had been sold.[53] The initial housing grant from the state Economic Development Department and two more federal housing grants have helped to subsidize the loans for 24 of

[53] The success of the low-income housing has also led to the formation of a for-profit corporation that builds moderate income homes and has built twelve units and sold seven. This latter corporation works jointly with the non-profit and it is likely it will operate as a non-profit rather than distribute profit to the investors.

the owners, keeping the loan amounts in the mid-$50 to mid-$60,000 range. Records of the non-profit housing organizations indicate the 34 units are home to 118 persons, with almost all of the adult occupants working in Solidale. The goal of providing local housing for working class residents has been a success, but Development Corporation surveys of local businesses reveal substantial numbers of local employees still commute from outside Solidale. The non-profit housing organization plans to continue developing housing as long as there is demand or until private builders are willing to build affordable houses.

The cooperation among government, local organizations and institutions, and businesses have made this project a success. State and local government were key actors for acquiring and administering the housing development grants. The Solidale Development Corporation and a local trust were key to organizing the project and providing equity capital. The local banks, businesses and industry were all willing investors or provided the credit necessary for the project to be adequately financed. The cooperation among all these entities was easily coordinated through the organizational core and the Development Corporation.

There were important contributions of several individuals as well. The generalized community leadership of Sumner is evident in this activity. Sumner is recognized as first broaching concern about local housing during the late-1980s and was an instigator for local action. He had the capacity through his networks to begin generating awareness of the problem and eventually organized action occurred. The project also benefited from the leadership of the President of Solid Bank A, who has served as the housing committee chair and non-profit corporation president since its inception. He is a member of the largest consultation clique and also was a moderately central leader in the organizational network. The cooperation with the city was facilitated through the help of the city manager, who is an advisory member of the Development Corporation.

This project clearly made use of local community structures. The project was initiated and implemented by the elite groups of leaders. Four members of the largest

consultation clique, both of the top reputational leaders (Sumner and Sorenson) and the five most connected organizational leaders identified in Table 5.7 played an important role in the project according to one housing project informant. The project's capacity to mobilize significant institutional and individual resources was also facilitated through the organizational structure.

One interesting episode related to the housing project which occurred just before the last field visit illustrates a possible downside of the Solidale organizational and leadership structures. The community benefit of the housing project was questioned by local school district administrators, none of whom had direct links to the core organizations nor were they central interorganizational, consultation or reputational leaders. These school officials approached the housing group to express concern that the low-income housing was attracting special needs children to the district and increasing the school's financial burden. Subsequent research by the housing committee revealed that this supposition was unfounded since the new housing was generating substantial property tax revenue and the project was not attracting at-risk families into the school district. School officials, without much information about the project, appear to have stereotyped the project as attracting non-working, at-risk families to the community that required increased governmental support. This is an interesting example of how a somewhat exclusive interaction network failed to keep peripheral organizations or social fields informed about a project as well as keep the core informed of possible concerns in the community.

An interesting question to ponder is what, if any, response will be developed to address the concerns of school officials—the financial burden of increasing numbers of special needs students from low income families. The challenge to the core leaders' project may be an impetus for creating more inclusive networks and expanding the organizational network to better represent the variety of community interests. The criticism of the housing project has led to core leaders realizing there is a greater need to keep the community

informed. The economic development bias of the core will not likely change overnight, but dialogue concerning the housing project may be an impetus for a more inclusive structure which has better balance.

These two community action efforts in Solidale clearly benefited from the local organization and leadership structures and one can conclude that this structure serves as a form of social infrastructure capable of generating tremendous resources and developing necessary support for projects. Concerns about the exclusive character of Solidale's core leadership and organizational structure must be noted despite the successes, for example the concern of school officials.

Generalizing from just two examples of local action is difficult, but the patterns described in these action processes are consistent with some of the other local community action projects which were discussed with local informants. There are numerous examples of local projects originating from outside the core organizations or power elite that were able to access the local network structures and gain support for the projects. The annual community festival, organized by a group of local merchants, has mobilized significant organizational and institutional resources to create a popular two day event. The success of the festival and other local cultural/museum developments have spurred the Development Corporation to organize a tourism committee. The committee has resulted in an regularly convened community forum for generating support, interest, and ideas about local tourism development. A local youth center, started by a retired pastor, has benefited from the moral support of Sumner and other core organizations and elites. The youth center provides a popular recreational center for junior and senior high age students on weekend nights and has involved many parents with little connection to the core or elites.

One important structural feature of Solidale contributing to a community oriented elite and egalitarian initiation of successful community projects are a couple of trusts and the Prosper Community Foundation. The annual income from two private trusts, both with

assets in excess of one million dollars, have been used to fund numerous community projects—including the housing project, a science museum, a history museum, and the library. The two trusts were formed from substantial estates of two local bankers without immediate heirs. The largest of the two trusts has awarded over two million in grants since its inception in 1986. The Community Foundation provides a mechanism for smaller gifts from local residents to be used for community improvement. The community foundation was established in 1965 and now has assets in excess of 1 million dollars. Through 1995, the community foundation had awarded over 1.3 million dollars in scholarships and grants to various projects throughout the county. The resources of the trusts, coupled with active generalized leadership in the community and a core approximating a community field, Solidale has clearly developed network structures capable of sustaining exciting and fruitful community action.

**Action in Tryton**

The two projects in Tryton are a successful prison recruitment effort and the development of a fairgrounds and annual fair. The prison recruitment was a recent success and the prison was under construction during the field research. The fairground project was initiated after some land was donated to the local fair board in 1991. The fair board has improved the land for use as a fairgrounds and for other local events held during the year.

The prison recruitment project was the culmination of the Tryton City Council's initial expenditure of $100,000 for economic development in 1989-90. The money was used to hire a full time economic development director and led to efforts to develop an industrial park and recruit industry. As early as May 1989, the Tryton Development Authority advised the Tryton city manager to submit Tryton's name as a possible site for a state prison. Over the next few years, the city administrator, the economic development director, and the Tryton Development Authority continued to express their interest in being a prison site to state level

agencies and committees. The community was eventually identified as a potential site for a women's correctional facility and a long political process ensued. Public support for the project was extremely high during the review process and both the local state senator and state representative provided political support.

A large, and relatively spontaneous outpouring of support during the recruitment process is a source of pride for many Tryton residents. When the prison-site selection committee visited Tryton, there was a tremendous outpouring of community support. The evening of the site visit, when the bus carrying the review committee left town, the committee was greeted by hundreds of local residents lining the road with flashlights and candles to demonstrate their support for the prison. Supporters in two nearby small towns also lined their streets to show support. In the spring of 1994, as the decision deadline approached, a community photo with hundreds of local residents (including school children holding a banner "Tryton's Vision: The New State Prison") was organized and presented at legislative testimony by city leaders. Tryton was named the site of a 1,204 bed women's medium security prison in December of 1994 and the local Tryton paper published its first special edition in at least a generation to announce the decision. The prison broke ground in 1996 and was scheduled to begin operation in 1997, creating about 406 jobs.

The local development organization and city government staff were the leading organizers of the activity, with the individual leadership of the economic developer and the city manager. Tryton's local newspaper was supportive throughout the project, providing substantial coverage and keeping the public informed at all stages of the process. The local school, Chamber of Commerce, civic organizations of all types, local business and industry, and even residents of several neighboring small towns provided public support. The outpouring of support for the candlelight vigil during the site selection visit was described as a great moment in Tryton history by numerous informants who were proud of how the community acted together, believing that his mission had been completed.

The consensus and collaboration of so many individuals is difficult to explain structurally. The openness of city officials about the process and the newspaper's coverage of the multi-year, political process of recruiting the prison likely contributed to the community consensus. The pride and enthusiasm of successfully clearing each hurdle of the selection process culminated in a week long flurry of support with the visit of the site selection committee. A city government organized town meeting, newspaper coverage, and the willingness of church leaders to announce the candlelight vigil on the Sunday before the visit enabled widespread dissemination of information about the activity. A type of whole community coalition was organized around the site visit, with individual project leaders garnering support from all types of local citizens and institutions. Corroboration of widespread support for the prison is found in the resident survey, where nearly two-thirds of respondents indicated the prison posed no threat to the community and less than eight percent thought the project severely threatened Tryton's future.[54]

Given the earlier characterization of Tryton's amorphous interaction structures, the relative spontaneous and brief outpouring of resident and organizational support reflects a relatively high level of community solidarity lacking an on-going organizational structure to consistently direct that enthusiasm. The outpouring of activity quickly faded after the site visit and no structure for future mobilization remains. Since the prison siting decision, there has been limited collective activity to improve local housing or improve local shopping opportunities to capture the benefits of the anticipated influx of workers into the town. Further, city government ceased funding the economic developer soon after the prison siting decision.

The second Tryton project is the development of a fairgrounds for an annual fair and was selected as an example of a community improvement activity which improves local use

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[54] This question was asked of residents during the construction phase of the prison. The same question might elicit a different response after the project begins operating.

values.[55] In 1991 a local couple donated 40 acres of land adjacent to Tryton and in 1993 the first fair was held at the new grounds. The 21st annual Tryton Area Fair in 1996 was the third fair held on at the fairgrounds. During its first two decades, the fair was annually held in a Tryton park. Fair organizers are proud of how the fair has provided quality entertainment with a series of top country performers over a series of three or four nights.[56]

The fair is organized by a non-profit organization with an 18 member board and 10 associate board members. To develop the buildings and infrastructure for the new fairgrounds, a lot of labor and equipment was donated. In addition, the city of Tryton loaned approximately $15,000 to the Fair to pay for the utilities and a loan of about $100,000 was received from Try Bank A. The actual fair itself is financed through a combination of fair ads, admission fees and booth fees. Since 1993, the event has struggled to break even, generating around $125,000 in revenue and about the same amount of expenses. Full loan payments to the city and the bank have not been possible thus far. Additional income has been generated through the use of the fairgrounds for a number of other activities, including a bluegrass festival and a Native American pow-wow.

While local government provided some financial assistance through a loan for utility improvements, some fair board members feel the city could have done more to help since the event attracts an estimated five or six thousand people to the community on a given day. For example, the city could have extended the utilities to the grounds for no charge. Institutional and civic involvement in the activity is limited to the purchasing of fair ads, food booths used as organization fund-raisers, or sponsorship of some activity at the fair. There were indications from informants that support varied from year to year. The local newspaper has been very supportive, assisting with the fair promotion and publication of the fair books. The newspaper has been one of the leading financial contributors to the fair as well, providing

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[55] Tryton has limited history of local improvement projects which improve use-values.

[56] Organizers were quick to note how they booked Garth Brooks just before he was making a big splash in the music industry and got him for significantly less cost than he was asking at the time of his performance.

substantial in-kind contributions. The Try Bank A is a significant project player, providing the loans to develop the grounds and restructuring the loan during the financial shortcomings of the last few years.

There is some concern among fair board members that the community has not been as supportive of the project as it should. According to a couple of fair board members, attendance by local residents is modest and local businesses benefiting from the increased traffic are not as supportive as they should be. An unwillingness of the city to develop utility connections free of charge has also bothered some board members. There has also been conflict among city council members, the ministerial association, and the fair over the sale of beer at the event—a leading source of fair revenue.

The project's organization and operations are entirely dependent on the work of the fair board members, who are a diverse group of area residents committed to putting on a good event. One individual, Bob Country, a local handyman is credited as a driving force of the fair. He has done a lot of the physical work of developing the new fairgrounds and served as a fair board officer for many years. He and his wife are both working class folks and have been long-time fair board members. Neither Country nor any of the other fair board members were identified as prominent individuals in the organizational, consultation, or reputational data. The heavy dependence on fair board members, the limited involvement of other organizations and businesses, and the financial debt of the fair board has raised some questions concerning the long-term viability of the project. One fair board member indicated they might have been a little to quick to build the fairgrounds and may have been smarter to have taken a slower, pay-as-you go approach to developing the grounds.

The lack of a community field and leadership structures through which consensus and support can be generated may limit the availability of pooled resources and information need for successful development of the fairgrounds. There is a belief among some fair board members that the project benefits the whole community and some resent that the community

does not seem to recognize that benefit. The potential for developing a consensus in the community may be limited without a community field where various community interests intersect and communicate.

Tryton's current structure requires individual organizations to seek support and develop cooperative relations entirely on their own, which may lead to obvious missed opportunities due to inadequate familiarity among organizations. An example that reinforces this observation is the total unfamiliarity of the Fair Board president with an effort by a committee of local African-American activists seeking to purchase and develop a local school for a possible cultural/community center.[57] Two projects similarly engaged in developing a property for public use in such a small community may have some important experiences to share if they are aware of each other.

In conclusion, Tryton's lack of social infrastructure in its organization and leadership structures may limit the options for community action to passive industrial recruitment efforts and also impede other community projects from accessing local resources and support. The absence of a community field for discovering the shared community interest in certain projects (such as the fairgrounds) also is a limitation. Other community projects, such as the local festival, also may be limited by the lack of organizational capacity. Although the situation of the festival is not as dire as the fairgrounds, the event does rely almost entirely upon the efforts of one or two individuals and does not have nearly the same level of organizational or resident support that one finds in the Solidale's festival.

The outpouring of relatively unorganized support for the prison recruitment demonstrate local solidarity despite the weak organizational capacity. In the near term, it will

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[57] Some detail about this project was collected during the field work. The project originated with some alumni of the segregation-era black school who wanted to purchase and renovate the now decayed property. The project is in its early stages and is actively being led by a number of local African American leaders. While the project can be identified as a project of the local African Americans, the organizers are beginning to seek community-wide support for the project, such as presentation of the project at meetings of various local organizations.

be interesting to see the impact of growing pains associated with the prison on local quality of life. The changes may be beneficial as well as harmful to local social infrastructure and the social capital which contributed to the outpouring of support. On the one hand, local solidarity and the consensus concerning the prison's benefits could be negatively impacted when the prison begins operation due to the influx of new workers into the community. On the other hand, an influx of newcomers into the community may contribute to reinvigorating the organizational culture and capacity of the community.

**Action in Lussville**

The two projects in Lussville for which additional information was collected are the development of a tax incremental financing district (TIF) to attract development to the west of Lussville and the start-up of a non-profit day care. The TIF district was created in 1994 with sewer and street improvements occurring soon after businesses were ready to locate in the district. The nonprofit day care began its second year of operation in late 1996 after beginning operation on a shoestring.

The impetus for the TIF district arose from the desire of a regional retail chain wanting to locate on undeveloped city property located near the interstate highway two miles out of town. Hopewell, the Chamber president, investigated the cost of constructing a sewer to the site and then began educating city council members about TIF districts. Tax incremental financing is a state-approved method of diverting future tax revenue for purposes such as infrastructure improvement. The increment of property tax increase resulting from a business locating into a TIF District is designated for a set period of time toward paying the cost of the improvement.[58] Hopewell's efforts were successful and the TIF was approved in

[58] A TIF can be an effective way of distributing the cost of infrastructure improvements over a period of time for the business and can be a mechanism through which a locality increases economic activity without having to raise taxes. There is a potential downside, though, if the increment of new taxes is not sufficient to pay for the improvements over the specified time period. In this case, the locality will have to absorb the cost of the improvements. Also, all taxing entities are impacted by the arrangement, thus schools and county governments

1994. A general obligation bond of $960,000 for a term of 12 years was issued in 1996 to pay for the infrastructure development and to improve infrastructure near the Lussville airport. Hopewell's research predicts that the needed $60,000 annual property tax increment will be generated by five new businesses and the local option sales tax generated within the TIF. Since its inception, two businesses related to trucking and transportation (relocating from the Lussville downtown), two new restaurants and a large retail chain store are located in the TIF district. An estimated 50 new full-time jobs have been created, with about as many part-time positions as well.

Hopewell took the lead role in generating support for the project. He brought in an outside consultant to acquire additional information about TIFs. Hopewell also worked to persuade the city engineer and public works director of the project's merits to gain their support. An interesting political move on Hopewell's part was to enlist the aid of the now retired President of Luss Bank A to gain credibility among community old-timers. This move enabled Hopewell to present the project under the guise of the now defunct Lussville Development Corporation rather than the Chamber. This strategic move was necessary due to the high level of animosity between the city and the Chamber resulting from the Chamber's suit against the city. As the dispute and individuals associated with the earlier controversy have faded away, the Chamber's role has grown in the TIF project.

There has been some opposition to the project, including the county government's concern about lost taxes (the opposition has subsided with additional information) and a few downtown businesses' concern about luring retail development away from the downtown (although the grumbling has not developed into active opposition).

A TIF project does not require much local mobilization, but Hopewell's strategic use of local organizations to advance the project and also the strategic development of individual

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also lose access to the new taxes and may have to rely on other tax sources to support other costs associated with development (See Stinson, 1992, for further discussion of the potential disadvantages).

support (the city engineer and public works director in particular) illustrate the need to form coalitions within the local organizational structure. His emerging role as a generalized leader with many links aided him in the process of pulling together the support of the retired banker, the city engineer, the public works director and eventually the city council. The recent history of conflict likely limited the scope of what would be an acceptable economic development project in the community. A well researched and planned TIF was perceived as a low-risk development acceptable to a generally conservative local government, according to Hopewell. If the project succeeds in paying for itself, the Chamber and local leadership may gain credibility for effective implementation of a project (an infrequent occurrence in many informants' memory) and contribute to the nascent organizational structure's longevity.

A second local project reviewed was the start-up of a local non-profit daycare. This project was the brainchild of a young woman (around 30), Connie Ross, who returned to the community after leaving for educational reasons. A mother, she recognized a need for quality, affordable day care and began doing research on what it would take to start a nonprofit community day care center. During the last half of 1995, she began contacting other area communities to gain additional information about non-profit day care centers. With some assistance from the County Extension director, Ross began holding local meetings to generate awareness and support. A board was formed, a building was located, and funds and equipment were acquired. After less than a year in operation, the center averaged around 29 children a day and had six full-time employees.

Ross, with the assistance of her board of directors, has worked hard and creatively to make the day-care work. A large number of small contributions have added up to create a workable, although makeshift, facility. The building was located after Ross gave an informational presentation to the local Kiwanis concerning the need for the project and the need to find a building. The building owner has subsidized the rent during the first year of operation. The city council provided $4,000 outright to help start the project and has provide

up to $2,500 in free utilities each year after she solicited their aid. Significant amounts of furnishings and supplies were donated by local residents. Ross sought assistance from the hospital for meals. The hospital has become a key source of help, providing noon meals at less than cost. The local banks have provided financial and in-kind contributions and one bank made an in-kind contribution of a junior executive's time to serve as the day-care center's financial officer. During the time of the field research, the day care was meeting with school representatives concerning collaborative efforts for school-age day care.

Besides Ross, the local school superintendent, the hospital administrator, a bank officer, the extension agent, and another young couple have been important project supporters. The hospital administrator is a member of the largest consultation clique, but the majority of of supporters are relative newcomers to community activism.

The project reflects a coalitional approach for mobilizing support. Without a long-standing interactional field resembling a community field, Ross has had to do a lot of repeated presentations explaining the need for the project and has approached numerous institutions and organizations individually to gain their support. Although the social infrastructure to better access local resources may be developing, the project does reflect the potential support that can be mobilized in the community.

In building the coalition, Ross has likely benefited as a new activist in the community. She has no association with previous controversies and can avoid some of the personality conflicts that persist among parties to those controversies. A different leader may have had a different experience.

In summary, Lussville's local action projects illustrate how single individuals must navigate (sometimes delicately) the organizational structure to gain support.[59] Past conflicts

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[59] The experience of the festival provides an example of what an organizer will do if there is some opposition to an activity. The 1996 festival was marred by some unruliness at the street dance requiring police intervention. The negative word of mouth and unfavorable newspaper coverage posed problems for the festival's continued support. Since the festival is not viewed as a whole community festival but rather an annual event of the local

require leaders to strategically develop support. There are resources to be accessed within the community, as tapped by the day-care project, but no coordinating structure to easily mobilize these resources. The absence of any recent community-wide fund-raisers might be seen as a further reflection of the community being unable to mobilize local resources. Community-wide fund-raisers are common in Solidale, which practically has a permanent fund-raising thermometer displayed on the downtown square. Even Tryton attempted a fund-raiser in the early 1990s which garnered modest support but didn't reach its goal.

The negative perception of local residents about the community's capacity to work together reported in the resident survey analysis and a history of controversy are significant obstacles to overcome for a viable and long-lasting community field to exist. The inability of many informants to recall effective project implementers or recent successful projects suggest that the heritage narratives (Harris, 1995) in Lussville are fatalistic compared to Solidale's narratives which are more inspiring. Tryton's community support for the prison recruitment is clearly a story that makes many local residents proud of their community. The creation of success stories in the community consciousness and day-to-day interaction may be an important step to building social capital and social infrastructure in the community. The TIF project and the day-care may help build that confidence.

### Support for Hypotheses and Conclusions

Findings in Chapter 4 (see Table 4.14) reveal that social capital-like components of the interactional community are related to local action. The existence of an open and accepting organizational culture and the existence of diverse communication among residents about community affairs were found to influence resident activism and perceptions of community action. These findings support the hypotheses that the structure and character of

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car club, the organizer decided to cancel the event for a year rather than have a potentially divisive fight with city government for permission to hold a 1997 event.

resident interaction (social capital) and organizational and leadership structures (social infrastructure) influence community action.

The bivariate analysis revealed a consistent pattern of residents of Solidale reporting the most embedded interaction patterns, the highest perception of a gemeinschaft-like bond, the most favorable belief in the inclusiveness of local organizations, and the strongest belief that the community can act. Tryton residents were not as embedded, did not report as high a gemeinschaft-like bond, and were not as favorable in their judgments of organizational inclusiveness or community action as residents of Solidale, but Tryton residents were moderately higher in their reports than residents of Lussville. The multivariate findings revealed that, net the effect of all the other measures of social capital and social infrastructure, there were significant community effects of Tryton and Lussville. The negative effect of the Lussville dummy code was notably greater than the effect of Tryton.

The network analysis found in Chapter 5 (see Table 5.13 for a summary of findings) reveals that there are different organizational and network structures in each of the communities which may help account for the negative dummy code effects. Each community was found to have varying capacity for resource mobilization and different abilities to generate consensus and support for community action projects. Despite concerns that the Solidale structure is not as inclusive as it could be, it appeared to have the greatest capacity to facilitate community action. Examples of recent community action illustrate this capacity. In Solidale the community field, generalized community leadership, and an organizational structure capable of coordinating and accessing significant resources contributed to successful outcomes of two local action processes. Other examples of community action, reported in limited detail, reveal a similar pattern of social infrastructure being useful for projects originating outside the core organizations

There are proportionally fewer organizations and leaders in Tryton than in Solidale and the existing organizations have fewer resources as well. The various structures reviewed

in Tryton are more amorphous, with leaders and organizations arranged in different patterns depending on the network structure under consideration. The structure appears to require a coalition building approach for accessing the limited organizational resources. The absence of generalized community leadership and a community field may stymie the success of the fairground project and also has limited other local projects. For example, the annual festival and the early 1990s community fund-raiser have generated only modest community-wide support. Despite the weaknesses in social infrastructure, residents are capable of acting and expressing their solidarity. Unfortunately, the remarkable outpouring of support for the prison has led to no organizational developments which can further tap that solidarity.

Solidale illustrates the potential for community action where there is both social capital and social infrastructure. Tryton illustrates a capacity to act, albeit in a limited fashion, where there are moderate to high levels of social capital despite weak social infrastructure. Lussville provides even a third arrangement of social capital, social infrastructure and community action. In Lussville's case, comparatively low social capital, revealed in the bivariate and multivariate analysis, limits the community's ability to act. Further, the history of controversy and associated factionalism of the organizational and leadership structures limits community action. It is too early to tell if the nascent social infrastructure emerging from Hopewell's generalized community leadership and the creation of bridges among various social fields in the Chamber will last. The examples of successful community action which avoided the earlier controversies and built coalitions may provide an impetus for the nascent structural developments becoming long-lasting. The structural improvements of social infrastructure may also lead to improved social capital, such as greater local solidarity, and an improved capacity for community action.

In conclusion, high social capital and social infrastructure have positive influences on community action in Solidale. Moderate social capital and low social infrastructure limit action in Tryton—but the community is still capable of expressing solidarity in a less

organized fashion. Low social capital and low social infrastructure appear to limit Lussville's capacity for community action, but the emerging social infrastructure observed during the field research may change this arrangement. Thus, there is support from the analysis of the three case studies that social capital and social infrastructure do have an influence on the existence of successful community action.

# CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSIONS

The theoretical lens and findings of this dissertation support the continued use of an interactional community perspective through direct examination of social network structures. This chapter examines some of the implications of these findings across a number of different topical areas. Some of the topics discussed are related to the questions posed in the introductory chapter: implications for community well-being, community development practice, and community sociology. The chapter begins with a discussion of how this research has illuminated some of the key principles of the interactional community identified near the end of Chapter Two, followed by a discussion of some of the unanswered questions of the research.

## Interactional Community and Structural Network Analysis

Two hypotheses proposed at the end of Chapter Two have broadly guided the analysis. Underlying the two hypotheses is the theoretical elaboration of the interactional community as a structural perspective and the identification of nine principles associated with the perspective. The dissertation confirms that social capital and social infrastructure are important influences on community action and also corroborates the validity of the underlying principles.

Several of the principles pertain to the definition of the interactional community: the community is an emergent product of social interaction, interaction defines the territorial boundaries, and the relative completeness of the local society conditions the emergence of an interactional community. The analysis adhered to these definitional principles and generally confirms the significance of place-based interaction. Residents whose interaction was most embedded in the community had a higher tendency to participate in community action. The issue of completeness of the local society deserves additional consideration given the finding

that working outside the community does not adversely affect one's participation in or belief in community action. This finding indicates that some community sub-systems may be less important than others for maximizing community action and local well-being.

The finding that geographically embedded interaction is significant is consistent with Hunter's (1975) "community saved" findings and Wellman's (1996) revisionist position that place should be brought back into community research.[60] The research recalls Galpin's (1915) study of the rural countryside as an early precursor of the interactional community and casts doubt on the definitiveness of Wellman's (1979) community liberated findings or Coleman's (1993) claim that "primordial" forms of social organization (such as community) are less relevant than rationally constructed forms of social organization in contemporary society.

The finding that gender and income influence community activeness are consistent with the fourth principle—that segregation and stratification can negatively impact the interactional community. The resident survey does not provide data for evaluating resident stratification directly, but there is reason to believe that interaction patterns in all three communities are segregated by gender and income—hampering the development of a gemienschaft-like bond and resource mobilization for community action. Network analysis of community residents' interaction patterns would be useful for further validating this principle.

The usefulness of structural analysis of community power needs further consideration given the interesting arrangements of influence in the three communities. The finding of an elite or pyramidal structure in Solidale with tremendous capacity to mobilize resources despite being exclusive requires further analysis. The assertion that a community-oriented elite structure has been beneficial to the community of Solidale may be contrary to positions of pluralist and conflict theorists. Such a finding should not be discounted because of

[60] Ironically, he helped take place out of community research.

ideological biases but rigorously scrutinized and tested to identify what might lead to a community-oriented elite rather than a growth machine elite. The possibility that amorphous structures can coalesce into factions or coalitions also begs the question about how communityness becomes a norm of cooperation rather than conflict.

The fifth principle concerned the emergence of a gemeinschaft-like bond. The community with the highest level of interaction was also the community with the strongest gemeinschaft-like bond in this analysis. The interactive and social psychological antecedents of the bond require more thought and analysis, but the field research and community survey suggest that the density and quality of local interaction structures do have an impact on the bond.

The sixth and seventh principles pertain to the existence and significance of social fields and community fields. The structural network analysis in the last half of Chapter Four illustrate and describe interaction structures that approximate social fields and/or a community field. Structural network analysis is found to be a very useful tool for identifying the organizational and leadership structures that can approximate a community field. A more refined examination of community action processes might better identify the leadership or network structures most important during different stages of the action process in social and community fields.

The identification of potential community fields in Solidale and Lussville, and the tremendous capacity for resource mobilization in Solidale's structure, adds further impetus for exploring the significance of whole community groups which temper the interest of the social fields with the community interest. The identification of generalized leaders and the significance these leaders play in action processes further corroborate Wilkinson's (1970; 1991) ideas of generalized leadership. The network analysis indicates that the capacity for generalized leadership can be discovered through identification of individual leadership networks.

The last two principles connect the interactional community perspective to the current social science interest in social capital and the applied interest in social infrastructure. These two issues were discussed in detail in the previous chapter. The point to stress, though, is that the structure and quality of resident interaction within the place-based community can be considered a form of capital that can increase local resource mobilization and communication. The sensitivity to diversity explicit in social infrastructure writing is found to be an important addition to the analysis of social and community fields. The quality and density of interorganizational linkages (strong in Solidale and weak in Tryton) and the openness and tolerance of the organizational culture (a problem with Lussville's history of controversy) are found to be additional elements of social infrastructure in need of further elaboration.

## Unanswered Questions

There are a number of unanswered questions and shortcomings of the current research which must be broached. Considering that emergent and dynamic are two words closely associated with the ideas of community and development, the cross-sectional character of this research requires the conduct of analysis over time to understand how these structures evolve and change. The assertion that the Lussville structure has recently emerged begs the question, will it last or change? Those factors associated with its development and possible permanence must be further examined. The assertion that the Solidale structure has been relatively stable and important to the historic development of the community also needs systematic validation.

There is also the issue of network completeness. Churches were not included in the organizational network analysis and leadership networks were not sampled at the fringes. These missing elements in the network analysis may overlook important community structures. Network analysis is a resource intensive endeavor, but there must be some level

of comprehensiveness. There is a need for further community network analysis to establish an acceptable methodology that can be deemed both comprehensive and workable given the available resources.

The dissertation is weak in its theoretical elaboration of the social psychological processes associated with the interactional community. The existence of the gemeinschaft-like bond was found to be significant, but explaining the exact processes of that bond's emergence is needed. Symbolic interactionism, communicative action, and sociology of emotions were briefly reviewed as having some usefulness for understanding the social psychology of solidarity. Further, the identification of central leaders in all three communities and the assertion that Sumner and Sorensen in Solidale and Hopewell in Lussville are generalized leaders requires some understanding of social psychological processes involved in leadership attitudes and behavior. In other words, what are the factors leading an individual to having a general community orientation? This calls for examination of the interplay of rational, normative, and affective motivations on behavior in a community context.

There is also some concern about the findings based on selective sampling of local action projects. Of the community action examples reviewed, all were community oriented (to varying degrees). Action projects that serve more selfish ends were not reviewed, so the question must be asked what effect structure has on less community-oriented action. Data about local action across a variety of social fields with varying degrees of communityness are needed to assess the relationship of structure to community orientation.

A final concern is the representativeness of the case study communities. While the intention is not to assert that the three communities represent all rural communities, there is some hope that the structures identified in each community are comparable to the structures in other communities. Ideally some kind of typology may be constructed to which various community structures can be compared. The power literature provides a basic template of

elite, coalition, faction, and amorphous structures. The finding of a community oriented elite structure in Solidale is not consistent with some of the expectations of the growth machine (Logan and Molotch, 1987), but does not invalidate the existence of a growth machine in many rural communities (Ramsey, 1996; Duncan and Lamborghini, 1994). Further case study analysis following the procedures of this dissertation are necessary to understand the variety of structures and the multiple personalities these structures can have. Once a more complete typology can be determined, practitioners and community activists will be better empowered to alter or enhance the structures.

## The Findings and Community Well-Being

This research illustrates how communities sometimes choose to act to "improve" local economic and social well-being. Local network structures were found to both facilitate and impede these activities. The long-term impact of interaction structures and the community action projects profiled cannot be assessed with the data, but background information about the historical development within the case studies provides some clues as to what may occur in their futures.

In Chapter 2, a trend identified in the demographic profiles is the gradual diversification of Solidale's economy since the 1960s. One explanation of the economic trend that can be inferred from local interviews is the organizational developments that took place during the 1950s and 1960s. According to one community old-timer, the initiators of the Solidale Development Corporation were a group of energetic WWII veterans who moved to the community in the early 1950s (Sumner was one of them). The established leadership structure appears to have supported the efforts of the newcomers and the Solidale Development Corporation was eventually born in 1963. The willingness of many local businesses to work collectively to create the Development Corporation led to a series of successful development efforts which contributed significantly to local diversification.

Also during the 1960s, another important organizational structure was created which led to sizable resources being available for community improvement purposes. The community foundation organized by a local lawyer has become a formal mechanism for encouraging local contributions to the community and has elevated consciousness of giving to the community.

Both of these organizational developments have contributed to Solidale's present community field. The widespread participation of local businesses in the Development Corporation and the gradual expansion of the core network to include a number of social fields has allowed community interest to be broadly defined and pursued. The resulting economic development and community improvement successes of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s have resulted in a relatively vibrant and vital community. This historic digression stresses the long term impact of community action and organizational structures on local economic and social conditions.

Anticipating the impacts of current community action and network structures on future community well-being challenges the sociological tendency to be "slow journalism." A number of predictions can be proposed. The impacts of the structural network patterns emerging in Lussville may not fully occur for years or decades. Just as a history of cooperation and success in Solidale has been a positive legacy that continues to grow, the history of controversy in Lussville may linger on under its own inertia. The low gemeinschaft-like bond reported by residents and the indication of recent factional antagonism in Lussville may be an outcome of interaction patterns established decades ago and may require decades to reverse. If additional leaders can be recruited and a consensus building process which is inclusive of many community interests can continue to develop, there is hope that social infrastructure and social capital may help improve community well-being. On the other hand, if Hopewell and his generation of leaders are thwarted and there is

divisive rather than constructive controversy surrounding action efforts, the community may continue to struggle as its population grows older and its young people continue to leave.

In Solidale, one expects continued community action success. The structures may become more inclusive; the formal leadership program has had nearly equal participation of men and women. If organized opposition of the elites does sprout up, there will likely be quick action by the core members to integrate this opposition into its midst before it becomes divisive. The inertia of working together in the community is evident in the community survey and is illustrated in a dense organizational culture with many leaders.[61] The community will probably continue to prosper and there will likely be community improvement activities which enhance local quality of life and economic development activities which maintain an opportunity structure attractive to current and future residents.

Tryton presents the most interesting future to predict. In one possible scenario, the prison may be a shot in the arm leading to a more vital organizational culture due to an influx of newcomers and the increased opportunities for young people to remain in the community. There could be a negative impact, resulting from newcomers challenging long-time residents and a decline of social capital (such as found in some of the social impact assessment literature relating to boom towns in the 1980s: Freudenburg, 1986; Freudenburg and Jones, 1992). There also may be little impact on local structures, with the community experiencing a modest population change as many workers commute from outside the community. In the latter case, there could continue to be a relatively amorphous structure with modest action efforts across social fields. Future community well-being may be more an outcome of chance than conscious collective efforts to direct change in Tryton.

The conclusion is that community well-being can be influenced by the interaction structures within the community. Solidale, with a high level of organizational capacity,

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[61] Solidale also has some rich heritage narratives (Harris, et al., 1995) that are regularly shared across generations which communicate how the community has worked together, instilling a norm that this is the way it should be. These narratives have had a noticeable impact on a several young leaders who were interviewed.

diverse linkages across social fields, and a community field with generalized leadership appears to be better able to manage and direct changes in the community. Lussville does not have the same quality of interactional structures. It has a history of controversy, and may be limited in its ability to direct and initiate local change. The existence of local factions or divisiveness can be difficult to overcome and may require a series of small successes to build social capital and social infrastructure. Tryton does not have high levels of social infrastructure or a community field, but has a moderate level of social capital. It may be able to act but has only modest capacity to manage or initiate action over the long term.

The validity of these characterizations will become evident in time, but the limited information of past interaction patterns and an understanding of the current structures suggest that community well-being is, in part, a product of the local social structure that can initiate and direct change and development.

## Community Development

If the argument that community social structure has implications for local well-being is accepted, then the findings of this dissertation have important implications for the practice of community development. Three important contributions to community development practice can be described: development of a new diagnostic tool for programming; identification of new dimensions for programming consideration; and elaboration of a community theory that can better inform development practice.

The finding that resident interaction patterns and that organizational and leadership structures influence community action is by no means a new finding. Kaufman, Wilkinson, and the branch of community development practice which focuses on self-help strategies direct attention to improving community social processes and structures. Wilkinson's (1972) idea of community development requires both development practitioner and community actor to understand social structure. Community development in this tradition entails the structural

development of a community, such as the formation of a whole community group or encouragement of generalized community leadership. *Community development requires tools for evaluating organizational and leadership structures.*

An important contribution of the dissertation is the utilization of network analysis to identify existing structures. Diverse participation is touted as an important consideration of self-help strategies such as community strategic vision programs (see Walzer, 1996 for more detail). Only informal and ad-hoc tools for evaluating diversity exist. Utilization of network analysis can reveal the organization of community sub-groups and leadership cliques to ensure there is diverse representation across important sub-populations. Without such a diagnostic device, the best intended efforts to be inclusive may have face validity—but wrongly assume the "diverse" participants are unconnected. In the meantime an important source of local stratification can be overlooked by eyeball methods. Techniques that reveal this stratification can be useful to self-help development strategies for achieving greater inclusiveness as well as conflict strategies that are better able to identify the opposing forces.

The research also identifies some issues that deserve more attention in practice and policy. Community research has unfairly associated networks of interaction with the "liberated" community findings of Wellman (1979). Interaction (e.g. such as consumption, friendship, or socializing) which is embedded within a geographic boundary is found to influence the likelihood of individual involvement in community social fields as well as the propensity to believe the community can act together. Community development practice and policy which focus solely on action processes and outcomes may be missing an important facet of the community (resident interaction patterns and the solidary bond) which can contribute to a greater likelihood for individual and community action.

Examples of developing local interaction might include creation of local interaction sites and social organizations which facilitate interaction and the development of a solidary bond. Sensitivity to these issues requires examination of interaction centers (Frielich, 1963)

or the "great good place" (Oldenburg, 1989) where daily interaction occurs. Proposing this type of development is by no means original, in fact, early rural community development was quite interested in the creation of local organizations and social institutions. A 1920 anthology of writings about the rural community edited by Sims (1920) is filled with extension agent and community development anecdotes concerning the importance of gathering places and social clubs to improve the social condition of rural places. Not to sound a Luddite call to return to the 1920s, but the survey findings suggest that increasing local social interaction can make a difference,[62] although they also indicate that individual action alone does not lead to community action. The case of Tryton also reveals how a lack of social organizations may limit capacity for community development.

A third and long-term contribution of the dissertation to practice may be the development of a more accessible community theory to inform and guide future community development programming. Wilkinson and Kaufman describe abstract concepts such as social fields, community fields and generalized leadership, but do not provide the techniques for either measuring or visualizing the concepts. They compound the complexity by using terms such as "emergent" and "dynamic," indicating that defining these concepts is very difficult. Synthesizing structural network analysis with interactional community theory helps render some of these complex concepts more accessible to both practitioners and residents. When residents were presented some of the basic findings of this research in community presentations, there was a noticeable rise in attentiveness when figures of local network structures were shown. The same rise in attentiveness should exist among practitioners who see applications of the theoretical and methodological elaborations of this dissertation. The self-help perspective has been reported in the community development society's journal in atheoretical terms according to Christenson's (1989) review. Making the key concepts more

[62] An unreported question from the resident survey identified school sporting events and restaurants as important community gathering places. Exploratory analysis revealed higher levels of local socializing among those who visited the gathering places.

accessible and measurable may contribute to theory more easily being integrated into reports of practitioners. A clearer theoretical explanation of development programs should allow for a more coherent evolution of the field, with a systematic structural explanation of why some activities do and do not work.

## Community Sociology

A number of the findings reported in the literature review resulted from research assessing the impact of community structure on federal anti-poverty programs of the 1960s (Turk, 1972; Clark, 1968). For some reason, during the 1980s and the early 1990s, community network or systems theories have been less prominent in community research even though the social conditions of communities remain an important interest. The impasse in the community power research and the ascendancy of Wellman's "liberated" community may have contributed to community theory falling out of favor among many social scientists. This dissertation, which revisits community structure as a salient feature of social organization, provides support for revitalizing community theory. The conclusion is that place matters and rational choice explanations of individual action and resource mobilization are insufficient for understanding community action processes.

The dissertation also adds new energy to a respected, but relatively untested and abstract community theory. Kaufman and Wilkinson's work has long been a cornerstone of community theory reviews, but direct measurement of interaction has not occurred. Further elaboration of interactional community theory with a structural network orientation is a natural extension of community theory.

The grounding of mid-range concepts such as social capital and social infrastructure in a community theory is another contribution of the dissertation. The interactional community perspective is found to be relevant for understanding contemporary concerns of sociology. The finding that different aspects of social capital, such as embedded

consumption patterns and friendship networks, are associated with different outcomes is an important finding requiring additional consideration throughout sociological research. The utilization of the social infrastructure concept has contributed to a greater sensitivity to diversity in the community field and social fields. Wilkinson and other interactional theorists have not directly assessed the issue of diversity, although they have been cognizant of its potential implications. Whether concepts of social capital or social infrastructure are necessary for understanding the interactional community perspective may be a matter of personal taste, but their application in this research project may be a necessary step in bringing community theory to the fore of social science research.

Not only do the findings of the dissertation enrich and promote the interactional community theory, the findings are relevant to other facets of community research, such as community power (if one can see beyond the elite versus pluralism baggage associated with this research tradition). The work of Laumann and associates, which has not been replicated, reveals important relationships between resource flows and power structure. Expanding their perspective beyond the rational choice-like interest in decision-making and competition for resources to look at how resources are collectively mobilized is an important addition to this structural tradition. The findings support further exploration of power structures and community action.

## Where To Go From Here?

In conclusion, the research outlined in this document can be viewed as part of a larger research trajectory that should sustain many future research projects and sociological careers. This dissertation has been relatively broad in its scope and further exploration of smaller facets of the community case studies must be conducted. There is a need for further theoretical elaboration of the interactional community perspective and the use of structural analysis. The possibility of building on these findings with additional case studies and the

refinement of the methodological techniques could lead to a better understanding of community and community action. Finally, using the findings to develop applied community development programming is an important avenue that must be pursued.

While interest in studying the community may rise and fall over time, communities persist and remain an interesting form of social organization. Industrialization and globalization may lead some to predict the demise of community, but such a prediction can not be justified as long as individuals choose to live with other individuals in groups. As long as this is the case, structural analysis of the interactional community should continue to provide fruitful ideas about how to improve the well-being of current and future community residents.

# APPENDIX A: RESIDENT SURVEY

## I. Place of Residence

***The first set of questions is about where you now live and where you've lived in the past.***

**A. Where do you live?** *(Circle your answer.)*

1. Within city limits
2. Outside city limits of <Community>, on a farm
3. Outside city limits of <Community>, not on a farm

**B. How many miles do you live from <Community>?** _____ miles

**C. Do you consider yourself to be a resident of <Community> or another community?**

1. <Community> 2. Phillips 3. Other:_____

**D. Have you ever lived in or around (that is, on a farm or rural nonfarm) the following sized communities?** *(Circle your answers.)*

| | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| a. Less than 500 population | 1 | 2 |
| b. 500-2,499 population | 1 | 2 |
| c. 2,500-9,999 population | 1 | 2 |
| d. 10,000-49,999 population | 1 | 2 |
| e. 50,000 to 249,999 population | 1 | 2 |
| f. 250,000 or more | 1 | 2 |

## II. Schools

**A. Please indicate whether you AGREE or DISAGREE with each of the following statements.**

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. In <Community>, children and youth can find supportive relationships with caring adults beyond the immediate family | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b. <Community> involves youth in community projects | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c. Parents in <Community> are actively involved in the schools | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

## III. Community Services and Facilities

**A. Please rate each of the following services/facilities by circling the appropriate numbers. Circle 8 if a particular service is not available in <Community>.**

| | Very Good | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't Know | Not Available |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Jobs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| b. Medical services | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| c. Public schools | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| d. Shopping facilities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| e. Adequate housing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| f. Recreation/entertainment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| g. Child care services | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| h. Senior citizen programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| i. Programs for youth | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |

**B. Please rate the overall quality of services and facilities located in <Community>.**

1. Very good
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Poor
5. Don't know

**C. Do you stay MOSTLY IN <COMMUNITY> to acquire the following services, or do you go MOSTLY OUTSIDE OF <COMMUNITY>? Please circle the appropriate numbers for each of the services.**

| | Mostly In <Community> | Mostly Outside <Community> | Do Not Use/ Purchase |
|---|---|---|---|
| a. Primary health care | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| b. Specialized health care | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| c. Shopping for daily needs | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| d. Shopping for "big ticket" items | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| e. Recreation/entertainment | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| f. Church | 1 | 2 | 3 |

**D. How would you rate the overall quality of GOVERNMENT services in <Community>?**

1. Very good
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Poor
5. Don't know

E. **Please rate the following GOVERNMENT services available in <Community>.**

| Government Services | Very Good | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't Know | Do Not Receive Service |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Police protection | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| b. Condition of streets | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| c. Condition of parks | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| d. Water | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| e. Fire protection | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| f. Garbage collection | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| g. Emergency response service | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 8 |

F. **Here is a list of things people have said may pose a threat to the future of small communities. Please indicate if you feel each of the following DOESN'T THREATEN, SOMEWHAT THREATENS or SEVERELY THREATENS the future of <Community>.**

| | Doesn't Threaten | Somewhat Threatens | Severely Threatens | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Lack of jobs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. Quality of schools | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. Increase in crime | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| d. Low quality jobs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| e. Loss of family farms | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| f. Closing of small businesses | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| g. Indifference about the community | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| h. Lack of leadership | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| i. Failure of people to work together | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| j. Loss of community spirit | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| k. People moving out of the community | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| l. People moving into the community | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

## IV. Attitudes About Community

**A. Rate <Community> as a place to live by indicating whether you AGREE or DISAGREE with the following statements by circling the appropriate numbers.**

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Overall, <Community> has more things going for it than other communities of similar size .. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b. Most everyone in <Community> is allowed to contribute to local governmental affairs if they want to ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c. <Community> city government is actively involved in local community improvement/economic development efforts. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d. Being a resident of <Community> is like living with a group of close friends ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e. When something needs to get done in <Community>, the whole community usually gets behind it ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| f. If you do not look out for yourself, no one else in <Community> will ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| g. Community clubs and organizations are interested in what is best for all residents ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| h. Residents in <Community> are receptive to new residents taking leadership positions ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| i. If I feel like just talking, I usually can find someone in <Community> to talk to ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| j. If I had an emergency, even people I don't know would help out ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| k. People living in <Community> are willing to accept people from different racial and ethnic groups ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| l. Differences of opinion on public issues are avoided at all costs in <Community> ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| m. If I called a city office here with a complaint, I would likely get a quick response ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**B. In general, would you say you feel "at home" in <Community>?**

1. Yes, definitely
2. Yes, somewhat
3. No, not much
4. No, definitely not

**C. About what proportion of the adults living in <Community> would you say you know by name?**

1. None or very few of them
2. Less than half of them
3. About half of them
4. Most of them
5. All of them

**D. About what proportion of all your close personal adult *friends* live in <Community>?**

1. I really have no close personal friends
2. None of them live here
3. Less than one-half of them live here
4. About one-half of them live here
5. Most of them live here
6. All of them live here

**E. Do you regularly participate in recreational or social activities with a group of <Community>ns?**

1. Very often
2. Fairly Often
3. Sometimes
4. Almost Never
5. Never

**F. During the past year, have you participated in any community improvement project in <Community> such as a volunteer project or fund-raising effort?**

1. Yes
2. No

**G. There are many reasons why people choose NOT to volunteer for community improvement projects. Please indicate whether you AGREE or DISAGREE with the following statements.**

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. No one has asked me to volunteer for a community project | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b. I'd rather spend my free time in other ways... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c. No community projects deserve my support. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d. I do not have time to get involved because of work or family obligations | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e. I do not have much to contribute to community projects | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| f. I don't really know how to become involved or volunteer | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| g. I've tried to volunteer for community projects, but the leaders did not want my help | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**H. Some communities have a number of informal gathering places where people can meet and visit. Are there any gathering places in <Community> you frequently visit (such as coffee shops, restaurants, school sporting events)?**

1. No, I do not go to any of the local gathering places
2. Yes, I do go to a place to meet and visit

**I. If yes, please identify up to three places or establishments you most often visit and the frequency you go to each place or establishment.**

| Name of Place/Establishment | Frequency of Visiting Gathering Place | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Other (specify) |
| 1. Name:_____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4:_____ |
| 2. Name:_____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4:_____ |
| 3. Name:_____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4:_____ |

**J. Would you describe <Community> as a community where people feel comfortable dropping in on each other without notice, or where they wait for an invitation before visiting, or where people pretty much go their own way with little contact with each other?**

1. Drop in without notice
2. Wait for an invitation
3. Go their own way

**K. When important community issues come up in <Community>, how frequently (if ever) do you discuss issues with the following people?**

| | Very Often | Fairly Often | Sometimes | Seldom | Never |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Family member | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b. Member of the opposite sex | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c. Business or professional person | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d. Someone with a different political orientation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e. Person in blue collar occupation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| f. Close personal friend | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| g. Person living outside of <Community> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| h. Friend at church | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| i. | Elected official or community leader..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| j. | Someone with whom you often disagree..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**L. In general, how would you describe your level of involvement in local community improvement activities and events?**

1. Very active
2. Somewhat active
3. Not very active
4. Not at all active

**M. Are you or have you recently been involved in local governmental affairs?** *(Circle your answers.)*

| Government Involvement | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| a. Held public office or served on a government board or committee in <Community> IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS..... | 1 | 2 |
| b. Held public office or served on a government board or committee outside <Community> IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS..... | 1 | 2 |
| c. Contacted a local government official about an issue IN THE LAST YEAR..... | 1 | 2 |
| d. Attended a local or regional government meeting IN THE LAST YEAR (city council, planning and zoning commission, rural water district, etc.)..... | 1 | 2 |

**N. Suppose that for some reason you had to move away from <Community>? How sorry or pleased would you be to leave?**

1. Very sorry to leave
2. Somewhat sorry to leave
3. It wouldn't make any difference one way or the other
4. Somewhat pleased to leave
5. Very pleased to leave

## V. Describing Your Community

**A. Imagine a scale for each pair of words listed below. For the first pair, 1 on the scale indicates totally friendly and 7 indicates totally unfriendly. The numbers in between (2, 3, 4, 5 and 6) are degrees of friendliness. For each pair of words, please circle one number which *best describes* <Community>.**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Friendly | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Unfriendly |
| Dangerous | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Safe |
| Supportive | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Indifferent |
| Exciting | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Boring |
| Prejudiced | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Tolerant |
| Rejecting of new ideas | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Open to new ideas |
| Trusting | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Not trusting |
| Well-kept | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Run down |

## VI. Organization and Group Memberships

**A. How involved are you in LOCAL groups and organizations, that is, those that hold meetings and activities in <Community>? Please circle '1' if you are not involved with a particular type of group. If you do belong to any of the organizations in a category, please circle the number that indicates your level of activity.**

| | | Belong: Level of Activity? | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Do Not Belong | Very Active | Moderately Active | Not Very Active |
| a. Service and fraternal organizations (such as Lions, Kiwanis, Eastern Star) ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. Recreational groups (softball, bowling, card clubs) ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. Political and civic groups (PTA, PEO, historical groups, local development organizations) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| d. Job-related organizations (labor unions, professional associations) ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| e. Church or church-related groups (church committees, Bible study groups) ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| f. All other groups and organizations ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

**B. Have you served as an officer, board member or leader of any organization or group in the past five years?**

1. Yes
2. No

**C. Considering ALL of the types of groups and organizations listed above, about how many *LOCAL* groups in total do you belong to?**

_____ groups/organizations

**D. About how many organizations that hold meetings *OUTSIDE* of <Community> do you belong to?**

_____ groups/organizations

**E. Considering your TOTAL involvement with organizations, would you say you are more involved with LOCAL ones or those OUTSIDE of <Community>?**

1. More involved locally
2. More involved outside <Community>
3. About the same
4. Don't belong to any

**F. Are you a member of a bowling league?**

1. Yes
2. No

## VII. Background Questions

***Finally, we need to ask a few questions about your background and past experiences. This information, as with all information provided in this survey, will be used for statistical analysis only and will remain strictly confidential.***

**A. Your age (as of last birthday)?** _____ years

**B. Your sex?** 1. Male 2. Female

**C. What is your current marital status?**
1. Married
2. Divorced/Separated
3. Never married
4. Widowed

**D. How long have you lived in the <Community> area?** _____ years

**E. Which best describes you?**
1. African American
2. Asian
3. Hispanic/Latino
4. Native American/American Indian
5. White
6. Other _____

**F. Have you ever lived elsewhere?** 1. Yes 2. No

**G. Do you own or rent your current residence?**
1. Own
2. Rent
3. Have some other arrangement

**H. If you are a farm operator or land owner, how many acres do you operate, own, or rent from someone else?**

1. Operate:_____
2. Own:_____
3. Rent from someone else:_____

**I. How many people, including yourself, live in your household?** _____ persons

**J. How many of the people living in your household are under 18 years of age?** ***(Write in "0" if none)***

_____ persons

**K. Your highest level of formal education attained?**
1. Less than 9th grade
2. 9th to 12 grade, no diploma
3. High school graduate (includes equivalency)
4. Some college: no degree; associate degree; or, completed technical school program
5. Bachelors degree
6. Graduate or professional degree

L. **Your present employment status?**

1. Employed or self-employed on a **full-time** basis
2. Employed or self-employed on a **part-time** basis
3. Retired
4. Full-time homemaker
5. Student
6. Unemployed

**Please list your primary occupation**

Occupation _____

Employer _____

Community where employed _____

Miles traveled to work (one-way) _____ miles

List second occupation (if any) _____

**Overall satisfaction with your present employment situation** *(circle your answer)*

1. Very satisfied
2. Somewhat satisfied
3. Somewhat dissatisfied
4. Very dissatisfied

M. **To be answered if you are presently married:**

**What is your spouse's present employment status?**

1. Employed or self-employed on a **full-time** basis
2. Employed or self-employed on a **part-time** basis
3. Retired
4. Full-time homemaker
5. Student
6. Unemployed

**Please list his/her primary occupation**

Occupation _____

Employer _____

Community where employed _____

List second occupation (if any) _____

Miles traveled to work (one-way) _____ miles

N. **What was your approximate gross household income from all sources, before taxes, for 1995?**

1. $9,999 or less
2. $10,000-19,999
3. $20,000-29,999
4. $30,000-39,999
5. $40,000-49,999
6. $50,000-59,999
7. $60,000-74,999
8. $75,000 or more

***Thanks for your cooperation!!!***

***If you have any additional comments, please use the back page.***

# APPENDIX B: INFORMANT SURVEY

## Individual/Civic Leader Respondent Survey Instrument

Respondent:_____

Interviewer:_____

Date:_____

## Section II: Economic and Community Development Projects

What do you think have been some of the significant economic or community development (successful or unsuccessful) efforts undertaken in Aurora the past five years?

| Community/Economic Dev. Project | Contact Person | Know* |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | | Y N |
| 2. | | Y N |
| 3. | | Y N |
| 4. | | Y N |
| 5. | | Y N |

*Is the interviewer personally knowledgeable about the project?

Additional Notes about the above projects:

## Personal and Community Social Relations:

Ask of all informants

## Section I: Organizational Involvement

**Introduction:** We would like to know the level of your involvement in various organizations in the community. The following series of questions concern what organizations you belong to as well as if you are or have been a leader in the organization.

1. Do you belong to any local organizations: Y N

2. What local organizations or groups do you belong to? (for example, service organizations; recreational groups; political and civic groups; job-related organizations; church related groups)

| |
|---|
| **1.** |
| **2.** |
| **3.** |
| **4.** |
| **5.** |

3. Are you a member of any organizations which meet outside of Vandalia? **Y N**

4. What organizations?

| |
|---|
| **1.** |
| **2.** |
| **3.** |
| **4.** |
| **5.** |

5. Have you held an organizational leadership positions in the last 5 years? **Y N**
(Either local or outside organizations)

6. What organizations and what was the position?

| **Organization** | **Position** | **Years** | **Location*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

*If headquartered in Vandalia, put Local

7. Have you held public office or served on a govt. board in the past 5 years? **Y N**

8. What Positions?

| Government Body | Position | Years | Location* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

## Section II: Networks

**Introduction:** In addition to the organizations you are part of, we are also interested in knowing something about the people you interact with in the community as well as your recreational and social interactions.

1. Do you have any close personal friends or relatives involved in community affairs?

| Name | Community Involvement | Relationship |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| 4. | | |
| 5. | | |

2. What kind of recreational activities do participate in in Aurora? (Outdoor/sporting clubs, softball leagues, bowling leagues, swim at the local pool, etc.)

| |
|---|
| **1.** |
| **2.** |
| **3.** |
| **4.** |
| **5.** |

3. Are you a member of a church? Y N
4. What is your Church Affiliation?_____
   b. Location (if not in Vandalia):_____

5. Would you say you are very active, moderately active or not very active in your church?
   **VA MA NVA**

6. What do you think are some of the significant or leading social groups in town?

| |
|---|
| **1.** |
| **2.** |
| **3.** |
| **4.** |
| **5.** |

7. What are some of the informal (or formal) gathering places in town?

| **Location** | **Who gathers there?** (General Characteristics) | **Do you go there?** |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | | Y N |
| 2. | | Y N |
| 3. | | Y N |
| 4. | | Y N |
| 5. | | Y N |

8. About what proportion of all your close personal adult friends live in Vandalia?
    1. I really have no close personal friends
    2. None of my friends live here
    3. Less than one-half of them live here
    4. About one-half of them live here
    5. Most of them live here
    6. All of them live here

9. About what proportion of adults living in Vandalia would you say you know by name?
    1. None or very few of them
    2. Less than half of them
    3. About half of them
    4. Most of them
    5. All of them

## Section III: Community leadership:

**Introduction:** We are also interested in who you believe the leaders of the community are. The following questions concern community leadership and power.

1. Who would you say are the individuals most effective in representing the community to the outside?

| |
|---|
| **1.** |
| **2.** |
| **3.** |
| **4.** |

2. If a project is before the community which requires a decision by a group of leaders, who are the five people who could make that decision?

| |
|---|
| **1.** |
| **2.** |
| **3.** |
| **4.** |
| **5.** |

3. Name the four people most effective in implementing projects?

| |
|---|
| **1.** |
| **2.** |
| **3.** |
| **4.** |

4. Name the three people most effective in stopping projects?

| |
|---|
| **1.** |
| **2.** |
| **3.** |

## Section V: Community Evaluation

**Introduction:** We are interested in your attitudes about Vandalia. Please rate Vandalia as a place to live by indicating whether you AGREE or DISAGGREE with the following statements by circling the appropriate numbers.

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Un-decided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Being a resident of Vandalia is like living with a group of close friends. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b. If you do not look out for yourself, no one else in Vandalia will. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c. Most everyone in Vandalia is allowed to contribute to local governmental affairs if they want to. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d. When something needs to get done in Vandalia, the whole community usually gets behind it. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e. Community clubs and organizations are interested in what is best for all residents. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

## Section V: Community Evaluation Continued

**Introduction:** We are also interested in how you would describe Vandalia. Imagine a scale for each pair of words listed below. For the first pair, 1 on the scale indicates friendly and 7 indicates totally unfriendly. The numbers in between (2,3,4,5, and 6) are degrees of friendliness. For each pair of words, please circle one number which *best describes* Vandalia.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Friendly | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Unfriendly |
| Indifferent | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Supportive |
| Trusting | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Not trusting |
| Prejudiced | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Tolerant |
| Open to New Ideas | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Rejecting of New Ideas |

## Section ___: Individual Background Information

1. Your age (as of last birthday)?_____ years

2. Your Sex: Male Female

3. Ethnicity:_____

4. What is your current marital status
    1. Married
    2. Divorced/Separated
    3. Never married
    4. Widowed

5. How Long have you lived in the Aurora Area?_____ years

6. Have you ever lived elsewhere? Yes No

7. Do you own or rent your current residence? Own Rent Other

8. How many people, including yourself, live in your household? _____ persons

9. How many of the people living in your household are under 18 years of age?

    _____ persons *(Write in "0" if none)*

10. Your highest level of formal education attained?
    1. Less than 9th grade
    2. 9th to 12th grade, no diploma
    3. High school graduate (includes equivalency)
    4. Some college, no degree
    5. Associate degree
    6. Bachelors degree
    7. Graduate or Professional degree

11. Your present employment status?
    1. Employed or self-employed on a **full-time** basis
    2. Employed or self-employed on a **part-time** basis
    3. Retired
    4. Full time homaker
    5. Student
    6. Unemployed

b. If employed or self-employed:
Primary occupation:_____

Community where employed:_____

Second occupation (if any):_____

***To be answered if respondent is presently married:***

12. What is your spouse's present employment status?
    1. Employed or self-employed on a **full-time** basis
    2. Employed or self-employed on a **part-time** basis
    3. Retired
    4. Full-time homemaker
    5. Student
    6. Unemployed

Spouses' primary occupation if employed or self-employed:_____

Community where employed:_____

13. Is there any information you would like to add that might be useful to our understanding of Aurora?

14. Would you like a summary report of our study when it is complete? Y N

15. Address and Telephone where respondent can be contacted for future contact

Name:_____

Address:_____

_____

Telephone:_____

**This is the end of the survey! Thank you for your time.**

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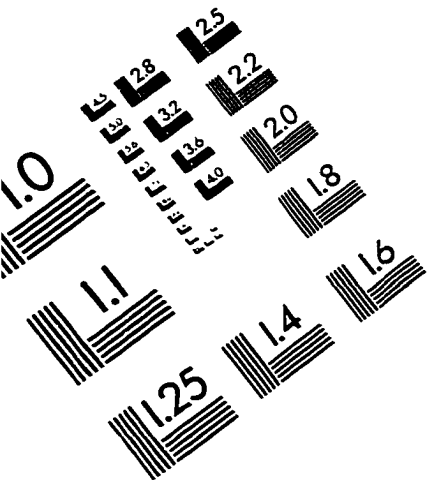
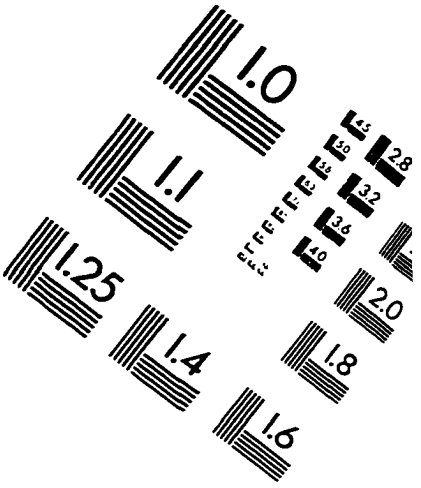
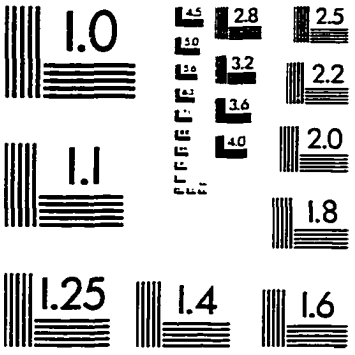
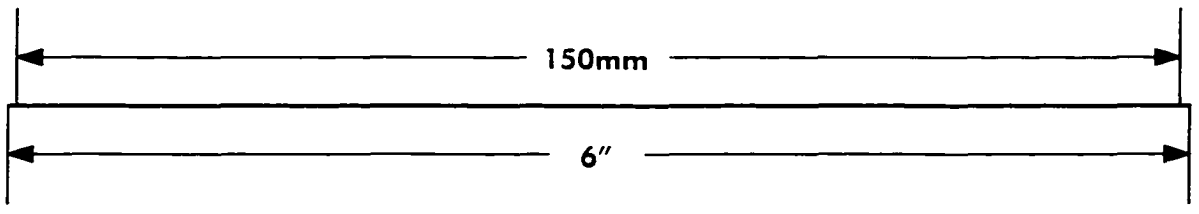
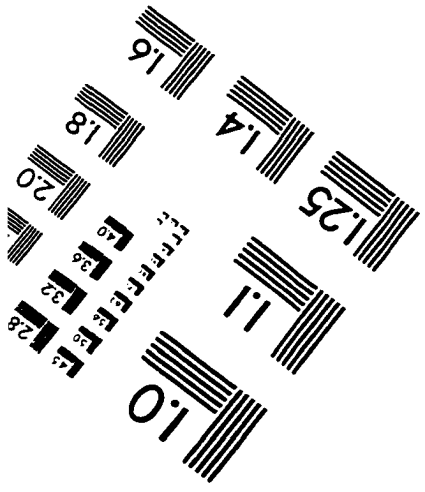
# IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)

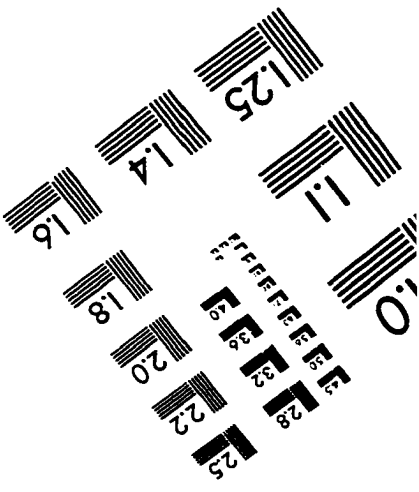
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